

Carcassonne To Barcelona Cycle



Duration: 6 days

This challenging, spectacular ride takes us from the beautiful fortified city of Carcassonne, through the rolling hills of Cathar country before reaching the mighty Pyrenees. Here we tackle the long twisting climb of the Port d'Envalira (2408m), in the tiny mountainous kingdom of Andorra; as you reach the top you've have emulated the pros from the Tour de France and Tour of Spain - a huge achievement. From Andorra we cross into Spain, riding south through the stunning Catalan Pyrenees to wonderful Barcelona.

This is a challenging ride over beautiful, testing terrain - you'll be glad to reach Barcelona and celebrate your achievements in this iconic city.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive Carcassonne/Toulouse

We meet at our hotel in the ancient fortified city of Carcassonne,* a wonderful place to start our challenging ride. After assembling and checking your bike for tomorrow, any free time can be spent exploring the castle and narrow streets of this fabulous city. We meet up in the evening for dinner and a detailed trip briefing before getting a good night's rest in preparation for tomorrow's efforts.

(Lunch not included)

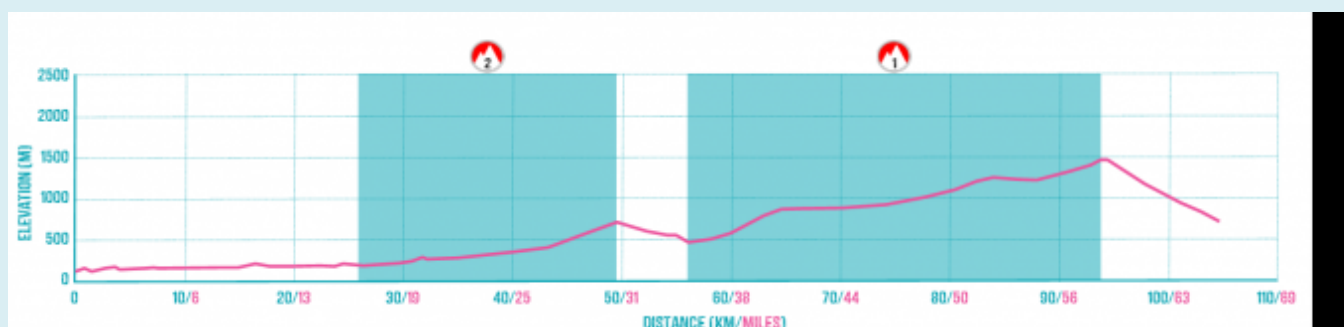
**Transfers are at your own arrangement. It is easiest to fly to Carcassonne and make your own way to the hotel. Toulouse (approx one hour away) may also be an option. Within an agreed time frame we will have crew at Carcassonne airport (and/or train station) to collect and transfer your bike so you only have to worry about your personal luggage. Outside of this time then you'll need to arrange the bike and luggage transfer to the hotel.*

Day 2: Carcassonne – Ax-les-Thermes

An early start takes us south through the foothills of the Aude. This is countryside synonymous with the Cathars, and there are crumbling hill-top ruins scattered around this region, as well as ancient abbeys and churches. Our rolling roads give us a gentle warm-up, and it's beautiful countryside. This is wine country, and we pass photogenic vineyards as we head closer to the Pyrenees. Our terrain becomes hillier as we pass the halfway mark, culminating in the Col de Marmare, a gradual climb bringing us to 1361m. It's a gentle climb and shouldn't be too much for anyone, but it's long and a good benchmark for our first day. From here it's a wonderful descent on hair-pin bends down to the spa town of Ax-les-Thermes. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 115km (70 miles)

ROUTE PROFILE

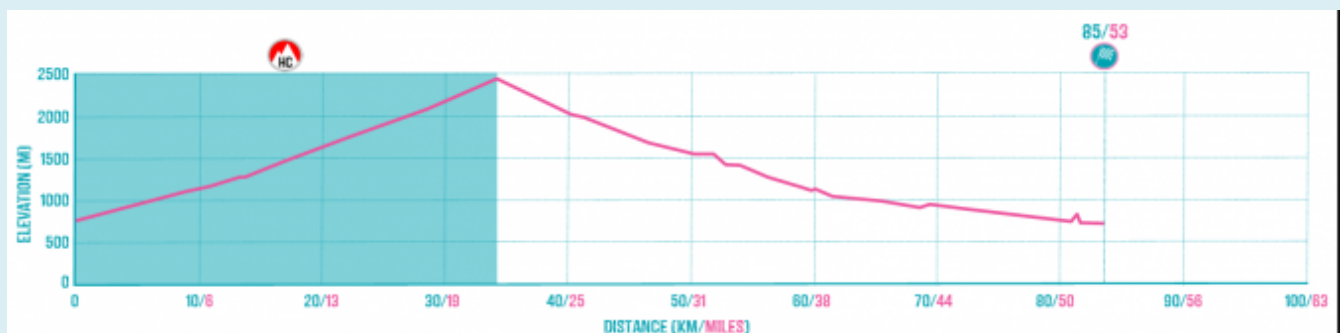


Day 3: Ax-les-Thermes – La Seu d'Argell (Spain)

Today is a day of three countries and two halves – up and down! We set off south from Ax, heading through a gently rising valley; this is a nice warm-up, as the gradient ramps up a little as we near the border with Andorra. It's not until the second half of the climb that the gradient becomes more challenging, so it's all about pacing yourself. The views of the mountain scenery around us are spectacular, with high peaks visible ahead; you may still be able to see snow on their summits. The Port d'Envalira has featured in the Tour de France and Tour of Spain, and is the highest paved road in Europe. As we near the border with Andorra most of the traffic heads through the tunnel, leaving us to appreciate a largely traffic-free finale to our climb. It's a huge achievement as we reach the top, at 2408m. The rest of the day is downhill! We set off down sweeping hair-pin bends which soon settle into a steady descent, passing through small towns and villages as we cross Andorra. We cross into Catalan Spain; our hotel lies in the small town of La Seu d'Urgell, a short distance after the border. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 90km (55 miles)

ROUTE PROFILE

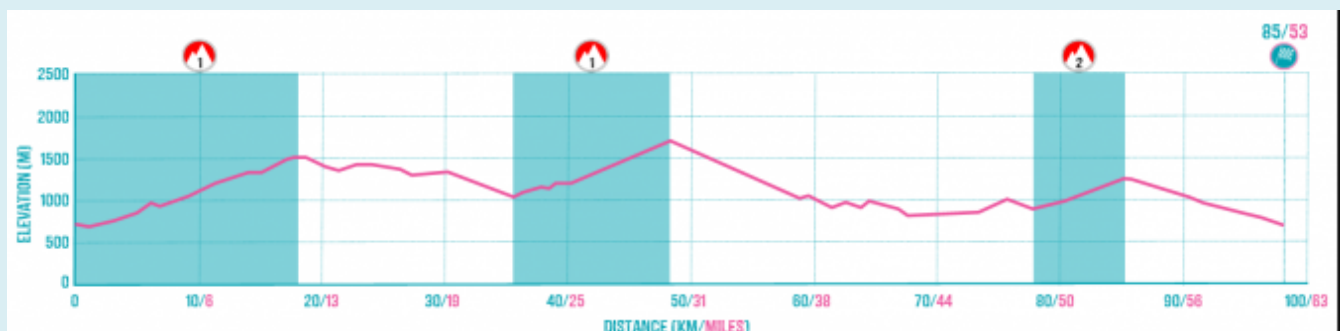


Day 4: La Seu d'Argell – Berga

Another stunning and mountainous day ahead of us, as we ride through the beautiful Catalan Pyrenees. On quiet roads, we pass through shady pine forests and steep rocky mountain slopes – much of the area borders a Natural Reserve. We head uphill almost from the start, to our first col. It's a steep climb in places, but much shorter than yesterday's big effort. A gentle descent gives us some respite before the gradient ramps up again for our next climb – again, quite steep in places. We pass picturesque mountain villages, and there is plenty to take our minds off our legs! Reaching the day's highest point at 1671m, we enjoy an exhilarating descent to Sant Llorenç de Morunys, a lovely mountain town with its 11th-century church and monastery. Our route now rolls along over undulating roads, passing through wooded valleys; the most rugged part of the mountains is now behind us. A short climb throws a last challenge before we have a wonderful downhill ride into historic Berga. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 100km (63 miles)

ROUTE PROFILE



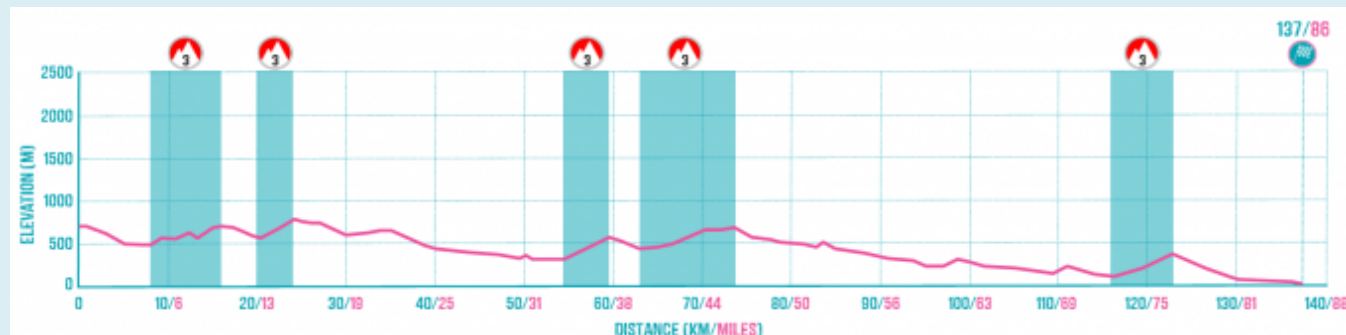
Day 5: Berga – Barcelona

Our last day brings us out of the mountains, on a diverse, undulating day through lovely rural scenery. We pass traditional Catalan villages and small towns with ancient churches as we ride through wooded valleys and farmland. It's a beautiful day and our spirits will be high with the mountains conquered and Barcelona ahead of us. We stop at a viewpoint overlooking the city, then descend and ride together into this wonderful, vibrant city. Scattered with impressive and iconic buildings and monuments, it's one of Europe's most popular cities, with a

cultural heritage including artists such as Dalí, Picasso, Miró and Gaudí. We see the iconic spires of Gaudí's Sagrada Familia basilica on the skyline as we ride, and finish at this unique and impressive symbol of the city. After time to freshen up at our hotel, we head out for an evening of celebrations to mark our monumental challenge. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 130 km (80 miles)

ROUTE PROFILE



Day 6: Depart Barcelona

After a leisurely breakfast, you may have time to relax or see the sights, depending on your return flight schedule.

(Lunch not included)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Meals except where specified
- Lunches & Snacks en-route
- 5 nights hotel accommodation on a twin-share basis
- Discover Adventure crew (number dependant on group size)
- Bike transfer from Carcassonne airport to start hotel (with agreed time frame)
- Vehicle support
- Mapping, GPX files and route information

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Transport (inc flights) to Carcassonne and from Barcelona
- Bicycle, cycle helmet (compulsory) and water bottles
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Travel insurance
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

GRADE | ORANGE

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trip lies within the **ORANGE** range.



The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions (see icon) are also taken into account.

[Trip grading explained](#)

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Leaders & Trip Support

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure crew - selected for their knowledge and experience, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises; they are also trained in first aid. The crew will have mobile phones and/or radios where appropriate, medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary.

The number of crew and support vehicles looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but the team will be looking after every aspect of your trip whether that's transporting your luggage, ensuring your route is clear, making you lunch and sorting out any mechanical problems. Support vehicles are with the group all of the time, and carry all luggage and spares.

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with communication devices (eg phones, radios and/or emergency satellite phones), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary, should local conditions dictate. Pre-trip administration - such as medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Accommodation

We usually stay in hotels or lodges of a 2-3* standard or equivalent. Standards may vary between the hotels but they are generally comfortable and convenient for our route. Hotels are often on the outskirts of towns to minimise unnecessary extra mileage and avoid traffic.

Roomshare Arrangements

Accommodation is usually on a twin-share basis in hotels convenient to our route. Please tell us if you know somebody else on the trip that you would like to share with and we will try our best to accommodate your request. If you don't know anyone else in the group don't worry, we always pair you up with someone of the same gender, and a similar age where possible. We do not charge a single supplement if you are a solo traveller in a shared room.

There may be a limited number of single rooms subject to request, on a first-come first-served basis, after you have booked. Extra charges will apply.

Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge. Our typical London to Paris groups run with approximately 30-40 participants whilst all other Euro cycles run with approximately 15-20, however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run however occasionally it may be possible to still run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.

Food & Dietary Requirements

We like to support local businesses and will source food locally wherever we can. Lunches will be a mix of restaurants along the route or supplies will be purchased from local shops; dinners are usually eaten at the hotel. For larger sized groups we may opt to cater the lunches ourselves with a buffet style provision. Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Having said that, despite working very hard with the hotels, it doesn't always translate into what we'd like for you. If this is the case on your trip, please chat to the crew at the time and they will do their best to find a solution. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you with all necessary information 6 weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check [Fit For Travel](#) for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and

then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by post or email. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration fees and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

Passenger Portal

We have a Passenger Portal which will give you more details of the challenge itself. It also enables you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).



Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 3 May 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.