

## London To Amsterdam Cycle Challenge In Aid Of MIND



Duration: 5 days

Cycling through the picturesque countryside of rural England, we cross the Channel and continue across the flat landscapes of France and Flanders in Belgium. Stopping in the magical city of Bruges en route is a real highlight. We continue into The Netherlands and the low-lying fields of Dutch Zeeland, protected from the sea by huge barrages, and head north to Amsterdam. After 4 long days of cycling, the sight of Amsterdam's canals, cobbled streets and wonderful architecture will evoke a real sense of excitement and achievement!

### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1: London – Dover – Calais

An early start from Blackheath Common allows us to avoid the morning traffic as we pass through the outskirts of London onto quieter roads. It is not long before we are among the rolling fields and villages of rural Kent, passing orchards and traditional oast houses where hops are stored. We head through Tonbridge and follow country roads across the hills of the North Downs to Dover and the coast. Taking the ferry to Calais, we have dinner on board and cycle the short distance to our hotel in Calais.

Night hotel. (Dinner on ferry not included)

Cycle approx 128km (80 miles)

#### Day 2: Calais – Bruges

After a hearty breakfast, we ride parallel to the coast from Calais towards historical Dunkirk, known best for the British evacuation in the Second World War. Our terrain is fairly flat, which will feel good after yesterday's hills! The Belgian border lies roughly at today's halfway mark; we cross it near the small town of Hondschoote. We continue

along the flat roads of Flanders, passing dairy farms and polders – low-lying areas reclaimed from the sea. We will see many dikes and canals which protect the land, which is now extensively farmed and dotted with small villages. This area was of great strategic importance during the First World War, and much of the land was deliberately flooded in 1914 to halt the German advance. We pass preserved WW1 trenches just outside Diksmuide. There are a few low hills approaching Bruges, but then we are in this 'Venice of the North,' famed for its canals. The historic centre is a World Heritage Site and an evening wander is a very pleasant way to wind down after our day's efforts! Night hotel.

Cycle approx 134km (83 miles)

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### Day 3: Bruges – Breda

Leaving the city, we ride north, crossing into The Netherlands at the small town of Sluis, and continuing to Breskens. A short ferry ride takes us across to the busy port of Vlissingen, in Zeeland. Here we ride east along the low-lying peninsula, formerly an island, which is protected from flooding by a series of sea barrages. Back on the 'mainland' we ride northeast through open fields of crops, passing small towns and villages. There are some low hills which stretch our legs before reaching the busier streets of Breda. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 148km (91 miles)

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### Day 4: Breda – Amsterdam

Our last day is another long one, but mainly flat as we head north through intensively farmed fields, which stretch for miles along our route. Most of this region is artificially created by man-made dikes holding back the sea. These polders are huge and the many villages, and intensive agriculture that takes place, is a testimony to man's ingenuity and skill. We pass the historic town of Woerden, known for its Goudacheese-making, en-route to the suburbs of Amsterdam. We then savour the experience of pedalling into one of the most cycle-friendly cities in Europe, passing canals and fascinating buildings on our way to the heart of the city and the end of our rewarding challenge! This evening we have a big celebration to mark our achievements. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 145km (90 miles)

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### Day 5: Amsterdam – London

We have free time to enjoy the sights of Amsterdam – a wonderful place simply to wander – before meeting at the well-known Centraal Station for our Eurostar journey back to London. (Lunch and Dinner not included)

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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 28 Mar 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.