

Italy Road Cycling – 8 Days

‘Passes of the Dolomites’: From Venice to Livigno



Join Global Adventure Guide on this 8 Day Pinarello Dolomites classic road tour of the majestic Italian Alps. Experience many of the famous mountain climbs international cyclists live to race among while experiencing the incredible alpine scenery and National Parks this breathtaking country has to offer. Along the way indulge in local cuisine and wine, visit the Reinhold Messner Mountain Museum. While this tour is graded medium to challenging it is also ideal for those who wish to take part in shorter daily rides. Non-riders are also welcome as sightseeing passengers on tour.

Venice the city of gondolas - We ride from Venice with its Gondolas and 1000 bridges to the heartland of the Dolomites, vineyards and the fruit chamber of Italy in South Tirol.

Ride many famous passes - We'll ride parts of the Grandondo de Pinarello, Passo de Gardina and the world famous Stelivo just to name only a few. This trip is suitable for beginners to intermediate riders. We'll also take time out to enjoy ice cream and pizza!

Great accommodation - We've selected small hotels and lodges with 2-4 star ambiance, and include 3 gourmet meals each day during the 8 day road cycling tour of the French Alps.

Tour Itinerary

Day 1. Treviso

Following individual arrival today in Venice (Marco Polo Airport or Treviso Airport) you will need to transfer to Treviso or we can arrange this on your behalf. Please make your travel plans so you can join our tour party by 2pm. Our tour begins this afternoon with a short familiarisation ride around the town. Treviso must be one of the most overlooked towns in Italy, overshadowed by its famous neighbour, Venice. Treviso has managed to escape the hordes of tourists and retains an authentic charm of it's own, dissected by canals and the Adige River, and encircled by Medieval Mura or town walls, this is an enchanting place to spend a few hours unwinding and enjoying authentic Italian culture.

Accommodation: Hotel Meals: Dinner No cycling

Day 2. Treviso - Belluno

Today we cycle part of the Granfondo Pinarello including the Passo di San Baldo (694m) at the foothills of the Dolomites. We ride through countless small villages and vineyards before reaching the unusually charming city of Belluno. Belluno is a special city, with its own microclimate, protected by the mountains. In ancient times it was a major hub on the trade route between the Republic of Venice and northern Europe. Belluno's fortified towers were strategically important to Venice, acting as an 'early warning system' for the always endangered Republic. Today, Belluno is a beautiful, quiet, clean, friendly city with hidden romantic corners, good restaurants, an exciting 'corso' (walkway) where young people meet and chat. This lovely city has some beautiful examples of Gothic and Renaissance architecture, which are worth a visit, together with the cathedral, the church of Saint Steven built in 1486, the Rettori palace and the City Hall.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: B,L,D

Cycling: 80-120km / 50-75mi, 4-7hrs riding

Day 3. Belluno - Toblach

Today our riding highlights are the 'Tre Cime di Lavaredo' (in German: 'Drei Zinnen') these three rock pillars are the symbol of the Italian Dolomites. As we climb from the foothills into the limestone landscape of the Dolomites, the road is flanked by forest on either side, before emerging into the mountains at Cortina d'Ampezzo. We cycle via the Passo di Mont Croce di Comelico (1636m, in German: 'Kreuzbergsattel') to Toblach. Toblach is located in the eastern part of the Val Pusteria at the junction of roads into the Val di Sesto (Sextental) and the Val di Landro (Höhlenstein Tal). The latter takes you south past Lago di Dobbiaco onto the Alemagna, the pilgrims' route from Germany to Rome. From the lake there's a superb view of the intimidating peaks of the Tre Cime di Lavaredo, rising to 2999m. The village, where Gustav Mahler spent his summers between 1908 and 1910, is today developed into a major resort and spa town.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Cycling: 90km / 56mi, 5-6hrs riding

Day 4. Toblach - Corvara

This morning we leave the lovely Hochpustetal and ride into the impressive Sella Massif. Today's passes have been ridden many times in the famous Giro d'Italia. We climb over Passo Tre Croci (1809m), Passo Falzarego (2105m) and Passo Campolongo (1675m) before rolling into Corvara. We finish the day with a short climb from Corvara to Kolfuschg, a village belonging to the community of Corvara. Corvara is the main centre of Alta Badia, a prestigious tourist area located at the top end of the Val Badia valley, surrounded by the peaks of the Dolomites mountains. Because of its geographic position in the heart of the Dolomites, Alta Badia gradually transformed itself into an avant-garde tourist area keeping intact its alpine character.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Cycling: 90km / 56mi, 5-6hrs riding

Day 5. Corvara - Bolzano

From Kolfuschg we roll down to Corvara and begin a long ascent to the Passo di Gardena (2121m), the gateway to the Dolomites. After the welcome descent we head South (left) and up the valley to conquer Passo Sella (2214m). The valley takes us down to Canazei from where we gradually ascend towards Pozza di Fassa passing beneath the spectacular eastern face of the Rosengarten. Eventually, we start the last climb of the day up the Passo di Costalunga (1742). As we pedal up the pass we reach the craggy peaks of the Latemar group to the left and the rosy pinnacles of Rosengarten soar up to the right. After having taken in the view, we start the descent down a narrow, deep, red-coloured gorge, called 'Mother Nature's sore throat.' We continue to follow the narrow Val d'Ega until we arrive in the Adige Valley. We end our day in a leisurely manner as we bike through forests and along the Adige River to the historic centre of Bolzano where there are countless opportunities to refuel with a cappuccino or gelato. Bolzano the capital of the Alto Adige province actually has two names in Italian Bolzano and German Bozen. The city has a somewhat split personality with its main square (Piazza Walther) named after a Tyrolean poet while other locations are named after Dante and Leonardo DaVinci. We will visit the Messner Mountain Museum Firmian (www.messner-mountain-museum.it), which is located at Castle Sigmundskron on the slopes above Bolzano. The MMM Firmian presents information about the mountains and its people and is a meeting place for climbers from all over the world.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Cycling: 80km / 50mi, 5-6hrs riding

Day 6. Bolzano - Prado

Today we ride along the Stelvio National Park, one of the largest and most interesting national parks in Europe. Situated in the heart of the Central Alps, it covers an area of approximately 135,000ha. The Ortler-Cevedale mountain range with its innumerable peaks rise almost 4,000m and is breathtakingly impressive with giant glaciers and towering sheer rock faces. Our tour will lead you into the heart of this mountainous world, where you will marvel at the different facets of nature. We take you to crystal-clear glacier lakes and bubbling mountain streams. In the morning we climb into the vineyards above Bolzano to the top of Passo di Mendolo (1363m), followed by a short descend and another climb over Passo di Palade (1518m). All afternoon we follow the river Etsch up its valley until we arrive in Prado at the foot of the impressive Passo di Stelvio. We stay here overnight to leave the giant ride ahead to rest for another day!

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: B,L,D

Cycling: 120km / 75mi, 7-8hrs riding

Day 7. Prado - Livigno

Today we have the unique opportunity to conquer the legendary Passo dello Stelvio (German: Stilfser Joch) mountain pass at 2,760m. The Stelvio climb involves overcoming an altitude difference of 1,869m and navigating through 48 hairpin bends. This pass is truly one of the top cycling passes in the world; many say it is the best! We spend all day in Stelvio National Park, in the heart of the Central Alps with views of the main Divide and of course the Ortler-Cevedale mountain range. Cycling has been at the heart of this region for

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many years and Livigno could be described as the capital of Italian cycling. In summer visitors come from all over the world to ride the immense and well developed road and trail network for both road as well as mountain bikers. The roads and trails climb to altitudes over 3100m under the glaciers of the Stelvio peaks of Ortler, Cevedale, Königspitz and Piz Bernina and extend as far down to the lush, hot vineyards of the Valtellina and Lake Como at a mere 350m above sea level.

Accommodation: Hotel

Meals: B,L,D

Cycling: 85km / 56mi, 5-7hrs riding

Day 8. Livigno (Departure Day)

Today is our last day and you have the choice of a transferring on to Tirano or taking part in more adventure. We also offer mountain biking from Livigno, please contact us for details! Livigno is an old, traditional, alpine mountain village set amongst the spectacular and wild mountains of the Stelvio National Park in the Italian Alps. The architecture of the village reflects this rustic background with traditional wooden, alpine buildings scattered around the mountain sides. Bordered on three sides by Switzerland, Livigno is neighbour to resorts such as St.Moritz, Poschiavo and Bormio. Collectively this area is known as the Alta Rezia. This alpine sports playground has over the years evolved as a mecca for skiing and cycling, both on-road and off-road, playing host to the Giro D' Italia (Italy's answer to the Tour De France), the 2005 MTB World Championships, 2004 MTB World Cup and the annual Transalp cycle races, as well as being a popular training destination for many diverse, national sports teams who favour the high altitude and sporting facilities during both summer and winter. Many famous sporting legends have lived and trained in the area including Lance Armstrong, Marco Pantani, Hans Rey, Georgio Rocca and Paula Pezzo.

Meals: Breakfast

No cycling

Tour Information

Included in 8 day tour:

- 7 nights in 3-4 star hotels (based on twin share)
- All meals as indicated in itinerary (lunches are picnic style)
- Arrival transfer from Venice to Treviso on Day 1
- 9-seater Backup vehicle & gear trailer
- 2 experienced tour guides
- Reinhold Messner Castle visit & entry fee
- Wine Tasting
- Italy Tour Riding Jersey

Not Included:

- Drinks & personal snack bars (e.g. Power Bar, etc.)
- Travel insurance
- Laundry
- Passport or travel visa requirements
- Bike rental is not available for this tour

Tour Grade - This tour is graded 5/6 active (on a scale of 1-10 with 9/10 being extreme).

Recreational Riders & Sightseeing Passengers:

Whilst this tour is graded moderate, we are happy to cater to a small number of recreational riders who may wish to take part with shorter daily rides. We also welcome limited numbers of non-riders on our tours. If you are keen to experience South Africa, but prefer to do this on four wheels rather than two, please do not hesitate to check our availability on your departure of choice.

2011 Departure Dates - JUL 16

2012 Departure Dates - JUL 09