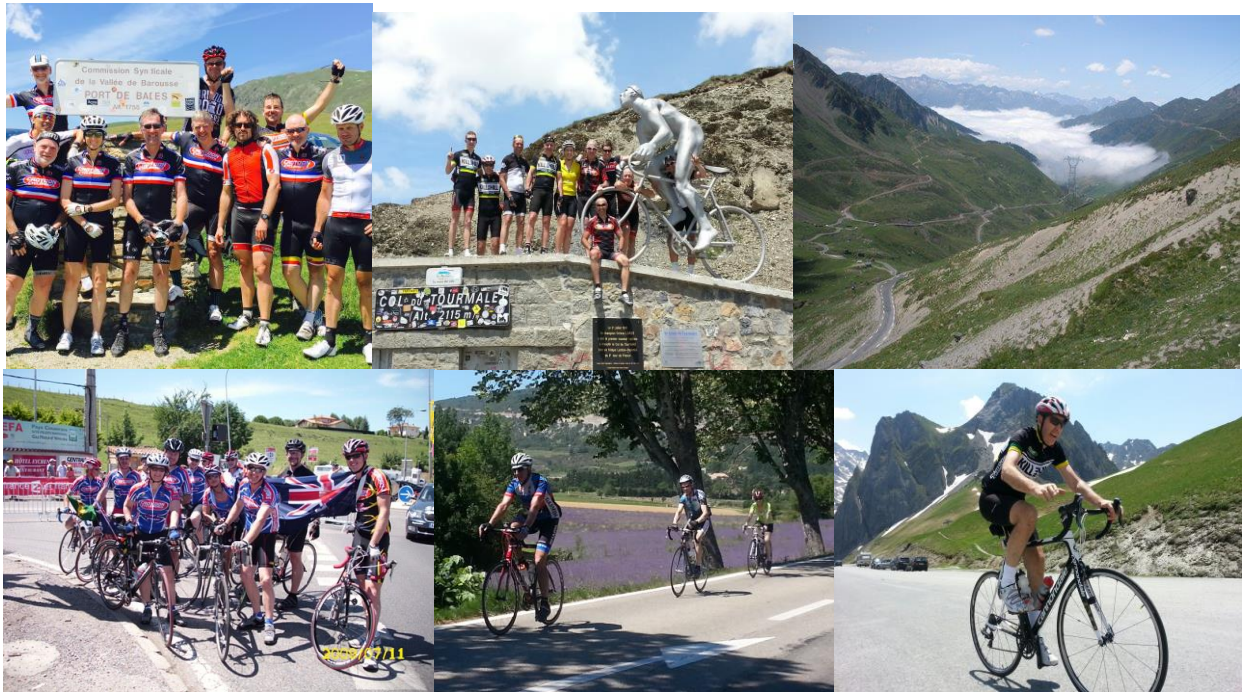


# TOUR DE FRANCE CYCLING HOLIDAY

TOUR PROVENCE and PYRENEES July 19th to July 30th 2017



*Pics from previous Croydon Cycleworks tours*

Cyclists around the world agree, France is truly the Mecca for road riding. Magnificent scenery, excellent roads, friendly motorists, great food and wine and a rich cycling culture are elements that make cycling in France a lifetime goal for many bike enthusiasts. The 104th edition of the Tour de France promises some terrific action and close racing. Will Froome be back for more time in Yellow, and will Richie Porte be the Aussie challenger we have been hoping for (don't forget Rohan Dennis). The French will be hoping for a local to show form, with some saying the race route has been tailored to suit Romain Bardet, who now is a real contender for the yellow jersey. Whatever the result, we will be in a perfect position to experience the colour and spectacle of the world's greatest bike race, while riding the roads and mountains that are part of tour folklore. Viva le tour!

Here are some key features of our 2017 tour.

- Our 11 day tour will start in Carpentras, in the heart of Provence, and in the shadow of the famous Mont Ventoux. We will then transfer to the beautiful spa town of Bagnères de Luchon, in the heart of the serenely beautiful Pyrenees, famous for its steep mountain passes.
- Experience the excitement of Le Tour as we see stage 19 of the Tour de France up close
- Group size is limited for a more intimate, flexible tour. A French speaking guide and mechanic will be riding with you or driving you at all times
- We will ride the toughest mountain passes famous in tour history, such as the Mont Ventoux, Port de Bales, Col de Peyresourde, and more.
- Our schedule is designed to minimize transfers and driving, most days you will ride from the front door, making for more time to ride and also more time to relax and enjoy the other aspects of holidaying in the French countryside. We are also more flexible with our schedule than other tours; you are always free to do your own thing if you wish, including doing extra riding!

## Proposed tour itinerary (subject to change)

**Wed 19th July** We pick you up from Toulouse station and drive east to Carpentras, deep in the heart of Provence. Our accommodation is an older refurbished hotel, which is conveniently situated on the edge of the town centre. Rest up and eat well tonight for we have some fantastic cycling ahead.

**Thurs 20th July** The beauty of Provence will be apparent in a 70km ride through local villages and farmland. The peak of Mont Ventoux is ever present as a reminder of what's to come. Our ride concludes with a leisurely lunch in town.

**Fri 21<sup>st</sup> July** Today's Tour de France stage 19 finishes in nearby Salon de Provence, providing us with a great opportunity to experience the excitement a tour stage has to offer.

**Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> July** All around France it is market day. Take some time to check out the local produce (the peaches and nectarines are incredible) before we head out on a beautiful 70km ride with a stop at the well preserved medieval village of Crestet, well worth taking time for a walk around.

**Sun 23rd July** Mont Ventoux is perhaps the most iconic, famed and feared climb in the Tour de France. It is a monster that tops out at 1910m. To ride this mountain is no mean feat even for accomplished riders, but it is immensely rewarding. The effort and the views will leave you gasping! We will celebrate in style tonight at one of Carpentras' best restaurants.

**Mon 24th July** We transfer to Luchon today. Time to brush up on your French phrase book and enjoy the scenery. We will be in Luchon in time to unpack our bikes and enjoy a home cooked meal courtesy of our wonderful host Elodie.

**Tues 25th July** The beauty of the Pyrenees will be apparent on our ride over the Col de Mente and Porte D'aspet (where we visit the Casartelli monument) and return via St Beat. A charming 110km route with some tough climbing. Cool down after ride by having a dip under the crystal clear waterfall located just nearby our accommodation (watch out for bears).

**Wed 26<sup>th</sup>** Epic ride day today as we retrace famous sections of the tour race route over the Col de Peyresourde to Arreau and return via Saint-Lary. A tough but rewarding 75km with a lot of climbing.

**Thurs 27<sup>th</sup> July** A delightful ride down the valley to St Beat then over the Col de Ares. Not too difficult and a great way to tune up the legs for a big day to follow. Make sure you try some local grown peaches and nectarines, the taste is amazing.

**Fri 28th July** We ride one of the most epic and famous climbs in the world today, the mighty Col du Tourmalet. It is an unrelenting climb topping out at 2115 metres with a gradient up to 10.5 percent. There is a monument to the tour and a café at the top (with some fantastic old bikes and photos on display), well worth stopping at to reflect on the effort it takes to ride here, and also the history the mountain represents for the Tour de France. A special dinner tonight at a rustic hilltop restaurant, famous for its fresh homegrown produce.

**Sat 29<sup>th</sup> July** We will head to Bossost in Spain over the Col du Portillon, stopping for a tapas style brunch and return via St Beat and Marignac. An easier ride today of 65km. Farewell dinner tonight cooked by our host Elodie.

**Sun 30<sup>th</sup> July** We say goodbye today as we drive you back to Toulouse to drop you off at the station by midday.

**Cost of this tour is \$4350 including GST. This represents fantastic value as similar commercial tours can cost twice this much.**

- Airfares are not included. You will need to organize your own transport to Toulouse (easy access from Paris via the very fast TGV train or by air). We will drop you back at Toulouse station by midday on the final day.
- Includes comfortable accommodation in a quiet scenic location a short ride from town centre (rooms are shared)
- All breakfasts and some snack food are included. Dinners at Luchon accommodation on three evenings are also included. Dinners eaten out and café stops are at your expense.
- Participants will be asked to contribute and assist at times with food preparation, packing and cleaning up. We don't make the beds or clean up after you but we will be there to guide, assist, and drive and ensure a hassle free holiday for you.
- Places are limited, so reserve yours early to avoid disappointment. A 50% deposit is required to secure your place with the final payment due April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. Some conditions apply regarding cancellation. Participants are required to take out their own travel insurance. No insurance = no ride.
- Special tour jersey is provided to participants
- You are required to bring your own bike for this tour. We have bike bags and cases available to hire or buy.
- To book or for more info email Mick [sales@croydoncycleworks.com.au](mailto:sales@croydoncycleworks.com.au) or call 03-97235164
- Places are very limited. Don't delay or you will miss out!

The Croydon Cycleworks tour is now in its tenth year and is a proven success, taking a carefully selected group of likeminded enthusiasts on what for many will be a trip of a lifetime. Here's what some past participants had to say about our tour.



***“What a fantastic tour! Superb riding, terrific food, and really well organized. The guys did a wonderful job. I would love to go again!”***

***“I'd been wanting to see the Tour de France for years, and this was a great way to do it. The trip was better than I'd ever imagined. Lovely accommodation and area, very relaxing. Spectacular riding. Loved it”.***

***“Mick and Adrian did a great job organizing, they were there to help if needed and made my time so enjoyable, wish I could go again”***