

london to paris bike ride, q&a



how big is the group?

The group is intended to be between 24 and 35 people.

do I need my own bike?

Yes. This is a long distance, on road cycle. We would advise a touring bike or if using a mountain bike, to have road tyres fitted.

do I need spares for my bike?

You should take 2 spare inner tubes and your own puncture repair kit which will help speed up and repairs / changes that need to be made. There will be a mechanic with you who will look after major repairs and we also carry a few spare bikes for emergency. If your bike requires any additional spare parts, you will need to pay for these at the end of the ride.

what about other equipment/clothing?

You will need to bring your own helmet so that the fit will be perfect. You will not be allowed to ride unless you wear a helmet. We recommend you bring your own gloves too, they are an essential piece of kit that will relieve strain & abrasions in the event of a fall. You must also bring your own padded cycle shorts and stiff soled sports shoes are recommended. Please refer to the kit list for more details.

what do I need to carry on my bike and with me during the ride?

It is recommended that you carry the following items on your whilst riding (these can be attached to the bike, carried in a small day sack, bum bag or in a handle bar bag):

- Bike pump
- Water bottles
- 2 x inner tubes
- Mini-puncture repair kit
- Waterproof/windproof lightweight jacket
- Snack bars
- Money
- Passport

what will the accommodation be like?

All accommodation will be in good quality tourist class hotels of 2-3 star rating. Rooms will be used on a twin share basis & all rooms will have their own bathroom. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

will my valuables be safe?

While we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times. If you have an expensive bike frame we advise you to either have a bike bag or purchase some 'pipe insulation' to protect your bike in the support truck on the way back to London. Whilst every care is taken, we cannot accept liability for any damage.

what is the food and drink like?

In the hotels you will have a continental breakfast buffet. At lunch time you will stop and have a light yet energy filled pub / restaurant style meal. Dinner will be either at the hotel or at a local restaurant. Water will be provided throughout. Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

who will be leading the group?

There will be a first aid qualified expedition leader who speaks English & French. This person & the support team will ultimately be responsible for the running of the itinerary and the safety of your group so please listen to instructions given out.

what is a typical day?

Wake early and pack bags. Have breakfast, fill water bottles, and load bags onto the support vehicle. Have the briefing for the day ahead. Check out of the hotel and warm up. Start the ride and continue cycling until lunch with regular water and snack stops in between. Later you will carry on cycling in the afternoon arriving at the hotel in time to unwind and freshen up. Evening meal and drinks in the bar.

how fit do I need to be?

Anyone looking to complete the ride at 25mph (fast!) the whole way should not book on this expedition. It will be run as a group challenge and although there will be opportunities to speed along, it'll only mean a longer wait for those who are slower. If you have never ridden before this ride is still achievable with the ride preparation. Start at least 5 months ahead of the ride with some short distances at weekends and whenever you can during the week. 5-10miles is not a great distance and will help your bottom and legs get used to it all. By 3 months prior to departure, you should be able to take on some long rides, up to 30-40miles in a day, and if you live in a flat area it is well worth while getting out and finding some hills. They may hurt, but the more of these you do the easier you will find the ride and the rest of your training. Within a month of the ride we recommend that you have done at least one 2-day ride, this will be the best indication of how well you are doing and mentally prepare you for the 3 days to Paris. If it is possible to train in groups then it is so much easier to get motivated. Remember, it is not about the speed but completing the challenge. Also see the Fitness Training Advice notes.

what if I can't keep up?

The event is not run as a race and there is always a large discrepancy in people's cycling ability, which is catered for. There will always be a staff member at the back of the group to ensure you are not left behind and can take things at your own pace. If we find somebody is unable to cycle at all, then we can transport him/her from one location to the next in the support vehicle. There is a ferry to catch on Day 1 that you do need to be on time for. Therefore should this become an issue, we can transport you in the support vehicle.

what happens if I fall ill, can't keep up or there is an emergency?

The back up support truck will never be far away and can be used in the event of an emergency. Contact will be maintained between expedition leader and the support team. Mobile phones have general cover and all guides carry one along with walkie talkies.

what is included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are included in the cost of the expedition: all internal transfers, ferry ticket to France and one way Eurostar ticket from Paris to London, all meals unless otherwise stated in the itinerary, all accommodation, group first aid supplies, an English speaking expedition leader and full local support team (assistant, drivers, mechanic, medic), relevant back-up facilities (lead car and support truck), a Charity Challenge T-Shirt, US\$20 to a local community project which we will inform you about after your expedition and discount from Nomad Travellers Stores for personal equipment.

what is not included in the cost of the expedition?

The following items are not included in your expedition and will be at your own expense: tips for the local support team, activities not mentioned in the itinerary, entrance fees to monuments & museums etc visited in your own time, personal spending money and travel to and from UK meeting point in London.

what shall I do about spending money?

You will not need large amounts of money during this trip. We suggest you bring a cash card for ATMs (check with your own bank about relevant charges), as you are unlikely to have access to a bank during its opening hours. You will only need money for tips, food & drink (additional), gifts & souvenirs and any other additional activity. Approximately £125 in Euros should be sufficient.

how much would you recommend for tips?

Tipping is personal and at your sole discretion. You should only tip if you feel that you have received good service. We recommend approx. £10 per person and this should be given to the expedition leader at the end of the expedition who will distribute it amongst the support team.

what do you do to protect the environment?

We follow local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection. We will also be donating US\$20 per participant towards Whizz-Kidz. Whizz-Kidz is a national charity that gives disabled children the independence to be themselves by providing them with customised mobility equipment, training and advice that is not available from the NHS.

can you recommend any literature about the region?

- Down and Out in Paris and London by George Orwell

english

Hello
Goodbye
Good evening
Please
Thank you
How are you?
Excuse me
Sorry!
My name is...
I don't understand
Yes
No
How much?
What is the time?
One
Two
Three
Four
Five
Six
Seven
Eight
Nine
Ten

french

Bonjour
Au revoir
Bon soir
S'il vous plait
Merci
Comment allez vous
Pardon
Pardon
Je M'Appelle
Je ne comprends pas
Oui
Non
C'est combien
Quelle heure est il
un
Deux
Toi
Quatre
Cinq
Six
Sept
Huit
Neuf
Dix

NB: The information provided above was correct at the time of going to print.