

Tour de France 2012

Alps | Provence | Pyrenees • 9-23 July 2012 (15 days)

Join Karl Woolcott and ride some of the most famous climbs in France while witnessing the greatest sporting event on the planet – the 2012 Tour de France.

Tour Overview

- Alpe d'Huez, Mont Ventoux and Col d'Aubisque
- 8 stages of the Tour de France
- Race start, finish, time trial and 3-4 mountain stages
- Ride the Champs Élysées when closed to vehicles
- Choice of 2 – 3 rides per day at your pace
- 5 guides including mechanic
- Luxury 48 seat coach plus 9 seat support vehicle
- 3 and 4 star quality hotels
- All breakfasts and 9 evening meals
- Non-riders welcome

Thank you for your interest in the 2012 Tour de France – we look forward to seeing you in France.

Experience the best of Tour de France (TDF) as you cycle through the Alps, Provence and Pyrenees on this two week tour. Starting in Paris, your cycle adventure follows various stages of TDF to ensure that we catch all the latest cycling action! We climb some of the most famous cols including Alpe d'Huez, Mont Ventoux and Col d'Aubisque taking in the stunning views at the top. At the end of your cycling day you will stay in 3 and 4 star quality hotels in some of the most picturesque French villages and indulge in the best French food and wine on offer!

There is no pressure to ride every day. Each day there will be 2-3 ride options with time to dawdle and sightsee, or gear up and get your heart racing. You choose your pace – cappuccino (40 -60km), latte (80-100km) or espresso (100km plus) ride! We'll face challenges on the bike but there is no hurry - we're there to watch a race, not be in a race.

The vehicles will be used to support the cyclists - however Non-riders are welcome - we'll get you to the right place at the right time.

Some days we'll ride part of the race route, see race starts, finishes, sprints and feed stations. We'll experience first-hand what it takes to climb mountain roads that separate champions from the merely excellent. At the same time we'll share the excitement of villages dressed up for the passage of the TDF while refining our taste for French cuisine in boulangeries, bars, cafés and restaurants.

By the time we return to Paris for the Champs Elysées finish, you'll have filled a mental memory card to overflowing with experiences of your own TDF.

Le
de TOUR
France



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Phone Karl Woolcott 0800 990 058

HOUSE OF TRAVEL

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Itinerary

Day 1 | Monday 09 July

Arrival – Paris (overnight)

Bienvenue sur to Le Tour de France

There's a mix of excitement as we gather together for the first time, with people arriving throughout the day. Our staff will be there to meet you at the hotel and help you settle in.

Today is all about setting up your bike. This afternoon we'll take a short ride out from the hotel to shake off the cobwebs and make sure the bikes are set to go.

Tonight we will have a welcome dinner at the restaurant close to our hotel, and run through our plans for the coming two weeks.

📍 Abba Montparnasse, 20 bis rue de la Gaité, 75014 Paris

🍽️ Dinner

Day 2 | Tuesday 10 July

Alps - Aix les Bains (3 nights)

Known for having fantastic mountain views, thermal baths and a relaxed atmosphere, our group will remember it as the gateway to some of the world's best bike riding. Yes, you'll get to ride Alpe d'Huez however the highlight will be stage 11 - Col de la Croix de Fer. 2067m of pure climbing pleasure and we'll be there.

We're up early today as we leave Paris for Aix les Bains. Today is a rest day for the TDF so our only pressure is to get on our bikes this afternoon and then have a swim in the lake. This evening we'll introduce our European guides who will be joining us in Aix les Bains. We'll then go through the options for tomorrow. As per usual, you'll have the choice of a cappuccino, latte or espresso ride - all meeting up with the TDF later on in the afternoon.

📍 Aix les Bains - Hotel Cervolan, 73420 Voglans

🍽️ Breakfast and Dinner



Day 3 | Wednesday 11 July

No rush today as the TDF literally comes to us. Our espresso and latte riders will be disappearing to the top of Col du Grand Colombier, this is the first time that the peloton have climbed this 1501m col. The other option is to rest the legs – the next two days are massive. The cappuccino riders will be at the

finish line at Bellegarde-sur-Valsérine. Stage finishes are a hive of activity, so we'll find a position for the arrival of the race caravan of over 300 vehicles, then the flurry of sprinting riders and support cars.

📍 Aix les Bains - Hotel Cervolan, 73420 Voglans

🍽️ Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 | Thursday 12 July

D-Day for climbers and torture for the sprinters. Four significant climbs within 140km including the fearsome Col de la Madeleine and Col de la Croix de Fer. 4800m of vertical gain – enough said.

Just as well we're watching the race, rather than in the race. We'll have an early breakfast and the majority of us will leave the comfort of our hotel for Col de la Croix. Be prepared for all conditions today

(don't forget the thermals). Nothing prepares you for the buzz of seeing the TDF live from the top of a big climb. The cappuccino riders will also be challenged today however we'll make sure you have plenty of time and we won't bite off more than we can chew. This evening you can sit back and enjoy a glass of red wine. Only one glass though, for tomorrow Alpe d'Huez awaits.

📍 Aix les Bains - Hotel Cervolan, 73420 Voglans

🍽️ Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 | Friday 13 July

Provence – Goult (3 nights)

We're staying in a town called Goult; it's in the heart of a group of magnificent villages such as Gordes, Rousillon, Bonnieux, Ménerbes and Fontaine de Vaucluse. You'll see some of France's most beautiful countryside as well as experience the world famous Avignon festival. Mont Ventoux is a small hop away so it will give us a chance to ride all 1912m at a leisurely pace. You can even ride it more than once if you wish.

Early start, we leave Aix les Bains for the slopes of Mont Ventoux – our home for the next three nights. One stop and possibly the most famous bike ride in France - Alpe d'Huez. The name sends shudders down the spine. We'll get you to the bottom so that you have plenty of time as we won't be seeing the TDF today. For those not wanting to cycle the whole 13km we'll drop you half way. Each switchback features a past champion – Armstrong, Pantani and Coppi to name but a few. Enjoy lunch at Le Bourg d'Oisans (your best chance to buy a nice cycle jersey) before leaving for the Giant of Provence, Mont Ventoux.

📍 Goult - Hotellerie Notre Dame de Lumieres, Lumières - 84220, Provence

🍽️ Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 | Saturday 14 July

Provence - Goult

Rest day for the legs today. We'll catch the race start at Saint-Paul-Trois-Châteaux and gently cycle home. Watch the riders as they sign on individually. It's very obvious to see who the French like and dislike. We'll make sure we're in front of a TV (café) to watch the stage finish. Mr Cavendish will feature today - guaranteed. This evening we'll pop in to Avignon – a stunning city and world heritage site. It's festival time and the street performers are amazing. Not to mention some of the world's top restaurants.

📍 Goult - Hotellerie Notre Dame de Lumieres, Lumières - 84220, Provence

🍽️ Breakfast (Dinner - own arrangements in Avignon)

Day 7 | Sunday 15 July | Mont Ventoux

We won't see the TDF today so we'll concentrate on the local rides that the area has to offer. That would be – the Giant Mont Ventoux. It's close by so feel free to leave the hotel when you want. In fact, there are three different routes so you are more than welcome to ride it twice. We'll shuttle the cappuccino riders up to Chalet Renard (6km from the top), favourite spot for hot chocolate fans.

Mont Ventoux is really your last chance for good cycling souvenirs so you'll have plenty of time to shop. This evening we'll have dinner in the hotel after we've watched the last of stage 14 on TV. It's a mountain stage so should be compelling viewing. Make sure you're at the bar early before dinner as it's a staff member's birthday. He tends to shout a drink or two...

📍 Goult - Hotellerie Notre Dame de Lumieres, Lumières - 84220, Provence

🍽️ Breakfast and dinner



Day 8 | Monday 16 July


Pyrenees – Lourdes (4 nights)

Lourdes gives us the perfect platform to choose between the likes of Col d'Aubisque, Col du Tourmalet and Hautacam. To get to all three mountains we simply leave our hotel, turn right, cycle 20km on a cycle lane, have a coffee at a stunning Alpine Town and then start riding. Expect half a million other cycling enthusiasts to be doing the same thing. Brilliant.

We leave Provence early today. The legs will be tired after yesterday's assault on the Giant of Provence so kick back and relax. It's a long way to Lourdes which is in the heart of the magnificent Pyrenees. The TDF stage today starts in Samatan and finishes in Pau.

We'll try and intersect it half way through in search of a feed station. This is where riders slow down and collect lunch and bidons (drink bottles). It's a great chance for souvenir junkies to grab a few team bottles – warning, you need to be quick.

Today's ride will be fairly relaxed. We'll aim for small farm lanes and ride 40-50km into Lourdes. We'll try to keep it flat as you have a fairly hilly three days ahead of you.

 Lourdes - Grand Hôtel Gallia & Londres, 26 av Bernadette Soubirous, 65100 Lourdes

 Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9|10|11| Tuesday – Thursday 17 -19 July

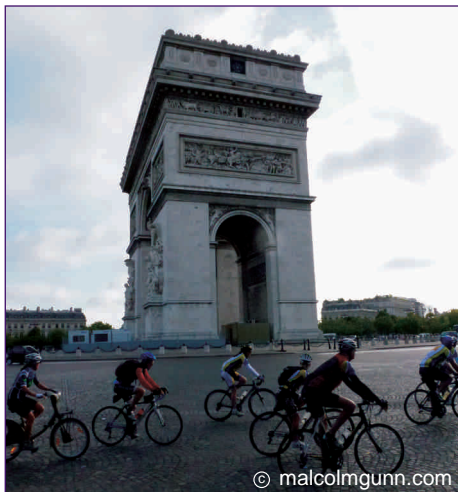
Three days in paradise. Choose from Col du Soulor, Col d'Aubisque, Col du Tourmalet, Luz-Ardiden, Hautacam to mention but a few. We won't know until May which of these climbs will feature in the actual TDF. We will build our itinerary around having you in the right place at the right time. My pick is that they'll head over Col d'Aubisque which has to be the most picturesque ride in Europe. The atmosphere is amazing, party central for the Dutch who have set up camp three days prior. By the time we arrive it's reached fever pitch. Not to be missed.

Tuesday is a rest day for the TDF so we plan to offer something a bit different for those repeat cyclists who have joined us from past years. We'll ride from Lourdes to Spain and back, our goal being the 2250m Col des Tentes. It will be a long day in the saddle however we'll support with our van and endless Coca-Cola.

There's also plenty to do for the cappuccino riders. From Lourdes we have a flat 40km return ride to a stunning village where the coffee is fantastic and the TDF simply has to travel through the main street.

 Lourdes - Grand Hôtel Gallia & Londres
26 av Bernadette Soubirous, 65100 Lourdes

 Breakfast, Dinner incl 19 Jul - own arrangements 17 & 18 Jul)





Day 12 | Friday 20 July

Paris (3 nights)

TGV and Moulin Rouge day... two 'must do' when in France.


We say goodbye to the Pyrenees and catch the supersonic TGV to Paris... With speeds of up to 320 km/h (200 mph), the TGV is the fastest way to travel to the French capital. This evening you have the option of seeing one of the world's most popular shows – Moulin Rouge. The majority of us will start with dinner as the show doesn't start until 9pm. (Bookings essential)


 Paris - Abba Montparnasse, 20 bis rue de la Gaité, 75014 Paris

 Breakfast. Dinner – own arrangements

Day 13 | Saturday 21 July

Time Trial day in Chartres which is 50km south of Paris (one hour on the train) It's a great opportunity to witness the cyclists as they finish individually. Today will probably decide the 2012 winner like it did in 2011 when Cadel Evans dominated the Schleck brothers. Watching each cyclist finishing individually is a must see TDF experience. You'll get a chance to see any Kiwi riders up close. In 2012 for the first time we are offering V.I.P tickets to both the Time Trial as well as the last stage in Paris. This gets you to within metres of the riders and the team buses.

 Paris - Abba Montparnasse, 20 bis rue de la Gaité, 75014 Paris


 Breakfast. Dinner – own arrangements

Day 14 | Sunday 22 July

The final day of TDF and although normally the race is all but decided, it is still a day with plenty of cycling action. In the last few years, the sprinters have dominated the racing on the Champs Élysées

with the battle for the Green Jersey, and this year should be no exception. You may want to simply enjoy the day in Paris, or join the crowds and take in the atmosphere of the race.

This morning, we will take you on a ride from the hotel around the sights of Paris and possibly a ride along the Champs Élysées, which will give you an appreciation of how skilled the race riders are to travel at such high speed over the cobbles. With no traffic, and the most beautiful city in the world as a backdrop, this is one ride you do not want to miss. Late morning, our staff will assist with the breaking down of the bikes, for transport in their cases back home. We'll make our way to the Champs Élysées to view the grand finale and culmination of 3 weeks cycling around France... it's no wonder that the TDF is known as the world's largest sporting event. Tonight is our last night together, so we'll have a farewell dinner in one of the most famous restaurants in Paris to celebrate a memorable two weeks.

 Paris - Abba Montparnasse, 20 bis rue de la Gaité, 75014 Paris

 Breakfast and Dinner

Day 15 | Monday 23 July

Au Revoir

Our tour finishes after breakfast at the hotel. For some people it's time to head home while others will take time to stay on in Paris. Transfers from the hotel to the airport or rail station can be arranged (additional cost) and we strongly recommend, especially if you have your own bike.

 Breakfast



HOUSE OF TRAVEL

Phone Karl Woolcott 0800 990 058

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Escorted by Karl Woolcott

Karl Woolcott has been successfully organising Tour de France holidays since 2005 and has helped hundreds of Kiwi's cycle around France. The itinerary you see is based on his personal knowledge, obtained after personally travelling to France every year. He is a passionate cyclist who tries to hop on a bike at least once every day. He strives to find the right mix between cycling France's magnificent countryside (mountains) with viewing the Tour de France. Logistically, following the Tour de France can be challenging so no stone is left unturned, however Karl recognises that Kiwi's like flexibility. Be prepared – for a holiday of a life time.

Package cost

NZD\$8,995 per person Twin Share
(Single supplement upon application)

House of Travel prides itself on being completely transparent with regard to the foreign exchange rates. You can pay now at today's corresponding exchange rate or you can choose to wait up until 90 days prior to departure and use the relevant exchange rate as at that day.

As an indication on 12 November 2011 the ROE was .55 NZD / EUR. Final balance is due 90 days prior to departure and the cost will be subject to currency fluctuations.

Deposit: Non refundable – NZD\$2500 required by 7 December 2011.
Group size: Maximum 38 (6 staff) Minimum 30 (5 staff)

Tour date 9 - 23 July 2012

Trip inclusions

- 14 nights' accommodation using quality 3 and 4 star hotels
- Breakfast daily, 9 x dinners including farewell dinner in Paris
- 5 guides including mechanic
- Transportation - Luxury 48 seat coach and custom built bike trailer
- Support vehicle - 9 seater
- Bike set up and any mechanical needs, including a tool box
- Commemorative Tour de France cycling Jersey
- Ride options – 2 to 3 guided rides daily
- TGV – fast train – ticket from Pau to Paris
- Maps and comprehensive itinerary, trips notes
- GPS assistance
- Full service from House of Travel for all pre and post travel arrangements

Trip exclusions

- International Airfares - Contact us now for the 2011 'Early Bird' airfares
- Bike Rental – from €40 per day
- Lunches, drinks & snack bars
- Travel Insurance - compulsory!
- Personal purchases
- Passport or Travel Visa requirements
- Pre & post tour accommodation or tours
- Tips for coach driver suggested to be 3 Euros per person per day
- Airport transfers – recommended when travelling with bikes
- * V.I.P access to TDF stage finishes – talk to Karl about the options
- * Moulin Rouge ticket

Call now for a booking form 0800 990 058

