

Devon Coast to Coast

Holiday information and itinerary

Ride Profile

Total distance: 102 miles

Days of cycling: 2 or 3

Terrain: Quiet backroads and traffic free cycle paths

Support vehicle: Vehicle support throughout the trip to provide mechanical assistance or emergency help

Tour staff: 1 driver / mechanic in support vehicle

The Devon Coast to Coast is a north to south ride from the craggy cliffs that overlook Ilfracombe to the imposing citadel at Plymouth's bustling seafront. Along the way you follow many old railway lines, riding over viaducts and through tunnels, as well as contouring round the beautiful Dartmoor National Park. Whilst the route has no climbs on the scale of the classic C2C across the north of England, there are numerous shorter climbs on the rolling backroads of mid-Devon.

We offer this ride as either a two-day package, which presents a good weekend challenge, or a three-day package which gives a more leisurely bike ride for those of moderate fitness.

Holiday Details

Duration (inc arrival evening): 3 or 4 days

Friday to Sunday (2 days of cycling)

Or Friday to Monday (3 days of cycling)

Group size: 6-16

You do not need to be in a group to book – all departures are open to both individuals and groups of all sizes. Groups over 16 riders can be catered for with sufficient notice.

What's included:

- 2 or 3 nights good guesthouse accommodation
- All breakfasts
- Transfer to start of the route on day 1 of cycling and return transfer from the finish on day 2 or 3
- Bag transfers between guesthouses
- Champagne finish at the seafront
- Post ride shower room on the last day

Cycle rentals:

Good quality rental bikes available for delivery to your guesthouse at the start of the trip.

Summary Itinerary

Cycling over two days

Day 1 (Friday). Arrive at guesthouse in Exeter in the late afternoon or evening. Overnight here and prepare for cycling.

Day 2. Transfer to ride start on north coast at Ilfracombe. Cycle to Hatherleigh in the heart of rural Devon. Overnight here.

Day 3. Cycle through South Devon to a champagne finish at Plymouth. Transfer back to Exeter to freshen up and head home.

Summary Itinerary

Cycling over three days

Day 1 (Friday). Arrive at guesthouse in Exeter in the late afternoon or evening. Overnight here and prepare for cycling.

Day 2. Transfer to ride start on north coast at Ilfracombe. Cycle to Petrockstowe in the heart of rural Devon.

Day 3. Cycle to Tavistock, on the western edge of Dartmoor. Overnight here.

Day 4. Cycle through South Devon to a champagne finish at Plymouth. Transfer back to Exeter to freshen up and head home.

Contact us to find out more or make your booking.

Email: info@cycleactive.co.uk

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Devon Coast to Coast

Detailed itinerary

In this section we describe the full route so those riding over two days or over three days can see where they take their overnight breaks in the 102 mile journey.

Your trip begins on Friday evening when you arrive at our chosen guesthouse just outside Exeter. Once you've checked in and received our rider pack you're free to head to the local pub or make the short trip into the heart of Exeter to enjoy some great food in one of the restaurants that surround the picturesque cathedral square.

After breakfast you and your bike will be transported to the North Devon coastal town of Ilfracombe to begin your ride (note that if you travelled to the trip by car we will show you where to leave it until you return on Sunday or Monday). The journey to the coast takes about an hour and a half, giving time for breakfast to go down before the pedalling begins. This is a last chance to make any last minute bike adjustments, and our guide will be there with spares and tool kit to assist, if needed.

Leaving **Ilfracombe** along the magnificent craggy coastline of North Devon you tackle the first steep climb of the journey, and the only really steep section in the first third of the route. At the high point there are panoramic views of the coastline, and from here you can also choose a slightly extended option that takes you right along the stunning three mile beach at **Woolacombe**.

The countryside rolls gently until, at the town of **Braunton**, you join the traffic free Tarka Trail. This almost level section follows the serene tidal scenery of the Taw and Torridge estuaries as you pedal through the busy market town of **Barnstable** and on to **Bideford**, where the route heads inland.

This section of the journey is a winding traffic free trail that takes you deeper and deeper into the beautiful Torridge Valley. Riding alongside the river, crossing it often, and passing through open fields, old English woodlands and passing small homesteads, you are really starting to enter rural Devon. For those cycling the route over three days your first night is usually spent here, at one of the country pubs or guesthouses between **Great Torrington** and **Petrockstowe**. If you are riding the route over two days you'll get further into the heart of Devon before overnighing in **Hatherleigh**.

The next part of the journey takes you into the hills as you ride the backroads on the way to Dartmoor. You reach the edge of the National Park just beyond **Okehampton** and head for the high point of the journey just beyond the magnificent viaduct at **Meldon** (built in 1874).

The scenery now is quite breathtaking as the green fields roll away to your right, while the giant Tors of Dartmoor rise up immediately to your left. The route follows the park boundary for much of the way now as we pass several small villages. Those riding over three days will take their next overnight on this section of the journey.

After joining the river Tavy before the town of **Tavistock** the route gradually heads for more level ground, and you start to see lush common land being grazed by Dartmoor ponies. Continuing south you eventually join the river Plym and follow the riverside trail into **Plymouth**, and our finish at the imposing Citadel on the seafront.

At the finish you can enjoy a glass of champagne while we load up the bikes for the transfer back to Exeter. Here we usually have a room reserved at the guesthouse so you can take a shower and freshen up before your journey home.

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Additional travel facts

Geography & Climate

The climate in Devon is one of the most predictably warm and sunny through UK spring, summer and autumn, but still with a chance of showers and cool spells. This is a ride through varied terrain including smooth traffic free cycle paths, quiet backroads and hilly roads in mid-Devon and around Dartmoor. The high point of the ride is 982 feet. We recommend that you travel with a good variety of cycle clothing to allow for the range of conditions. A full kit list will be sent to you on booking.

Accommodation & Food

We use guesthouse accommodation for this tour and the price is based on shared occupancy of twin or double rooms. If you wish to guarantee a private room for yourself then a single supplement is payable. We aim to let you enjoy comfortable evenings with tasty food available at nearby pubs or restaurants.

Cycling Support

This trip is supported by a vehicle, driven by one of our experienced professional guides, who will provide breakdown assistance and emergency help throughout the tour. The vehicle cannot follow right through the route but the guide can be called at any time and if necessary will cycle in to your location. Note that the vehicle is not for transporting people so if you decide to stop early or need a lift then a taxi will be called and there will be an additional charge for this. The ride is unguided so once you head out on your cycling days you are responsible for your own route finding. The route is well signed and there is a detailed guidebook produced by the Ultimate Guides specifically for the route, so finding your way should not be a problem. Details of the book and recommended maps are included in our pre-travel pack.

Cycle Rental

If you want to use your own bike we recommend either a mountain bike, hybrid bike with large tyres or a sturdy touring road bike. You can complete the ride on regular road bikes but some sections of tracks such as the old railway paths may be slippery or too rough for skinny tyres. If you want to rent a bike please contact us to discuss your needs and we will reserve a bike for you.

Clothing and Equipment

On booking, a detailed list of useful and essential items will be sent to you. You must bring your own cycle helmet that must be worn for all cycle rides. All clothing and equipment must be packed in one small to medium sized bag, either a soft holdall or soft rucksack. This is the maximum luggage allowed as all bags are carried in a minivan during bag transfers and space is limited.

Pre-Travel Information

When you book a more detailed pre-travel pack will be sent to you with information on what to bring, where to go, which maps to buy and so on.

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