



THE RAPID ALPINE CHALLENGE

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# ITINERARY- OUTLINE FOR BESPOKE TRIPS

The Raid Alpine is a classic road cycling challenge, starting from Thonon les Bains, on the shores of Lake Geneva through the southern alps to Antibes on the Cote d'Azur. The 750 km route takes in many of the legendary Alpine climbs which make this challenge world famous. In all the route covers an incredible 31 cols, 6 of which are over 2000 metres high, 16,300m of ascent across 6 days!

One of the toughest cycling challenges in Europe, the Raid Alpine is also one of the most scenic and beautiful high mountain passes, snow-capped peaks and finishing in sea-side resort of Antibes, on the Mediterranean. This is a challenge for the experienced and serious rider: long climbs and demanding descents, high altitudes, cols made famous by the Tour de France and the highest mountain pass in Europe. Collecting official stamps at dedicated points along the route. Upon completion of the challenge you will be rewarded with an official Raid Alpine medal.

## DAY 1 ARRIVE GENEVA

We transfer from Geneva airport, to our hotel in Thonon les Bains, located on the south side of Lake Geneva. This evening we have a welcome dinner and briefing on the challenge ahead.

## DAY 2 THONON LES BAINS TO MEGEVE

110km / 2743 m ASCENT

After an early breakfast, we leave the peaceful shores of Lake Geneva with a 10 km stretch before we tackle the first Col of the challenge, the Col des Moises (1118m). Today our route travels through pine forests, over the foothills of the Alps before hitting the Col de la Ramaz (1557m). This steady climb becomes steep after 8 km, as the altitude gets higher the views get better. The day ends with a climb up to the ski station of Megeve at 1107m, where we spend the night in a hotel.

## DAY 3 MEGEVE TO VAL D'ISERE

105 km / 3079 m ASCENT

Today's route travels through some of the best known Alpine areas. Starting out with a 2 km warm up before we start up on the Col de Saisies (1,633m) with an exhilarating descent down to the town of Beaufont. We then embark upon the Col du Pre (1,740m), followed by a short descent before climbing up to Cormet de Roselend (1,968m) followed by a 26 km descent. Next our route takes us on the start of the mighty Col d'Iseran, the highest paved mountain pass in the Alps. Today we only cycle as far as the famous ski resort of Val d'Iserre where we spend the night.

#### **DAY 4 VAL D'ISERE TO SESTRIERE**

**127 km / 2620 m ASCENT**

Today we embark upon the final 17 km of the Col d'Iseran (2,764m) before another whopping descent of 31kms. A short uphill of 600m climbing to the Col de Mont Cenis (2,081m), and then a great descent across the Italian border into the town of Susa. Climbing uphill steadily from here for ~35 kms to our end destination Sestriere. The Italian ski resort is located at an altitude of 2,000m and was home to the 2006 winter Olympics.

#### **DAY 5 SESTRIERE TO VARS**

**105 km / 3004m ASCENT**

We sneak in the Col de Sestriere (2,035m), before returning to Cesana Torinese and continuing back into France with a 500m climb up the Col de Montgenevre and then a quick 14km descent before the start of the infamous Col d'Izoard (2,361m). Following this we embark upon the first 9 km of the Col de Vars, this high mountain pass has been included in the Tour de France 33 times, and is famed for its fantastic views and classic Alpine meadows. Taking us up to our nights stop, in the classic ski resort of Vars, where we have a relaxing evening and dinner.

#### **DAY 6 VARS TO BEUIL**

**127 km / 3142m ASCENT**

This morning we set out on our way up to the Col de Vars with a 350m climb to the top, over a distance of 7 kms warming us up for the highest col of the challenge, and in fact the highest col in Europe, the Cime de la Bonette (2,802m). A tough 23 kms climb, the gradient is fairly steady, and upon reaching the summit we are rewarded with fantastic views of the surrounding Alpine valleys before a decent of 53 km down to St Saveur de Tinee. Our final Col of the day, the Col de la Couillole (1678m) takes us down to our nights stop in the lovely town of Beuil which is located within the Mercantour National Park.

#### **DAY 7 BEUIL TO ANTIBES**

**149 km / 2051m ASCENT**

After breakfast we depart early for a 22 km epic descent down to the Gorges de Cian; the forested scenery is stunning. From here you climb up the small Col de Raphael (876m), followed by some fabulous cross country riding on an undulating gradient. The last main col of the trip is the Col de Bleine (1439m), which is followed by a well earned 27 km descent into St Vallier de Thiey, where the coast comes into view through the famous town of Grasse. It is all downhill as you head into suburban Cote d'Azur. It's a bit of a shock to enter such populated areas after the tranquillity of the route, but also there is a definitive 'holiday' feel about the place! We take you on the quietest route into Antibes, and to the coast where the challenge finishes. We celebrate with a dip in the sea followed by a celebratory dinner and party well into the night.

#### **DAY 8 DEPARTURE**

Today we have a free morning before transferring to Nice airport for a return flight to the UK.



LOGISTICS

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## **COSTS**

From £1,499 per person

Minimum number 30 participants

## **CHALLENGE COST INCLUSIONS**

Pre-trip briefing by Action Challenge staff

International flights

Action Challenge cycle guide

Luggage Transfer

All accommodation

All meals, except in free time

All transfers

3 litres of water provided daily

## **NOT INCLUDED**

Alcoholic drinks

Travel insurance

Personal kit

Single supplement

Tips for local guides

Local departure tax

Fuel supplement

## **FOOD**

All food provided will be healthy and varied, and tailored to ensure that all cyclists are receiving the required amount of nutrition for the challenge. There will be water and energy snack stops along the route. There will be a rider celebration dinner in Antibes at the end of the challenge.

## **ABOUT ACTION CHALLENGE**

As our name suggests, Action Challenge specialises in the creation of challenging, travel-based activities the world over. Since 1999, we have worked with many blue chip companies, over 600 national and regional charities, schools, sports clubs, groups of friends and individuals on both UK and overseas events. With over 160 itineraries in some of the most unexplored places on the globe, we are proud of lengths we go to, to bring our clients experiences they would be unable to find elsewhere.

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