

# PYRENEES - Coast 2 Coast

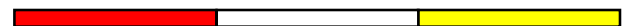
Barcelona to San Sebastian (Aug/Sept 2019)



“Col du Tourmalet”

## SIERRA

SPORTS & TOURS



[www.sierrasportsandtours.com](http://www.sierrasportsandtours.com)

AUS: +61 3 9016 9830

ESP: +34 679 236 928

## PYRENEES



### Pyrenees – Barcelona to San Sebastian!

The tour includes 9 unforgettable cycling stages taking in the best of northern Spain and southern France. Beginning in Barcelona your cycling begins in the rugged Huesca region of Spain in the foothills of the Aragonese Pyrenees. After some excellent warm-up cycling we begin our adventure through the breathtaking scenery of the Spanish & French Pyrenees!

Cycle the routes made famous by the professionals! During 2019 you will cycle the Tourmalet, Marie Blanque, Aubisque, Aspin and other hidden spectacular peaks that the Tour de France just finds impossible to reach such as Cap d'Long (second highest reservoir in France at 2160m elevation)!

The advantage of criss-crossing your way over the Pyrenees is that you will experience both Spain & France in the same holiday. The people, customs, cuisine and language obviously change dramatically in a small geographical region but the one constant is the unforgettable cycling routes to be enjoyed on both sides of the Pyrenees. **Are you ready to ride Coast 2 Coast?**





## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean
- Spend some extra time pre and post tour in Barcelona and San Sebastian
- Cycle the road less travelled as Sierra shows you northern Spain through the eyes of a local; Huesca, Navarra and Basque Country provinces!
- Enter into the heart of Tour de France (TDF) country via the Haute Pyrenees and Atlantique Pyrenees mountains!
- Criss-cross the Pyrenees with time to experience and understand the vastly different Spanish and French cultures!
- Ride mountains, through gorges, pristine national parks and up to old glaciers!
- Test yourself on the most famous TDF cols, including Tourmalet, Aubisque, Aspin, Peyresourde, Horquette d'Anzican & Marie Blanque!
- Impressive Spanish gastronomy including paella, fresh produce & jamon serrano!
- Hearty regional French cuisine fresh from the Haute Pyrenees farms

## ITINERARY

### DAY ONE – Tuesday 27 August 2019 – Barcelona, Spain

We will be available to meet you in the reception of Hotel Grums Barcelona at 9:30am. You are in no way obliged to stay at Hotel Grums Barcelona but previous groups have enjoyed its location, quality and services.

From Barcelona we drive 2.5hr to Benabarre/Alquezar where we will set up the bikes. You will warm up on an undulating route which takes in some breathtaking scenery passing two beautiful reservoirs. The 60km route takes us to the base of the Aragonese Pyrenees (Spain) where we still stay on the outskirts of Boltaña a quaint medieval village. Our accommodation for the night is a refurbished 16<sup>th</sup> Century Monastery.

**Meals:** Dinner included

**Destinations:** Alquezar

**Today's Ride:** 60km cycling

**Accommodation:** Boltaña (Aragon, Spain)





## DAY TWO – Wed 28 August 2019 – Aragonese Pyrenees (Spain)

Cycling from our amazing hotel your challenge for the day is the Alto de Fanlo climb. In order to access this climb you first must cycle to the entrance of the spectacular Añisclo Gorge. We will follow a narrow one way only road that weaves its way through this important bird habitat. If we are lucky we might just spot a Griffon Vulture! The climb out of the canyon offers postcard Spanish Pyrenees mountain views.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Destinations:** Añisclo Gorge & Fanlo

**Today's Ride:** 90km cycling

**Accommodation:** Boltaña (Aragon, Spain)



[Sierra clients riding with 5 x TDF Champion Miguel Indurain in the Spanish Pyrenees]

## DAY THREE – Thursday 29 August 2019 – St Lary Soulan (France)

Today includes the first ride on the French side of the Pyrenees. Passing through the Bielsa Tunnel and you are now in France! The descent down to St Lary Soulan is fantastic. Because it is a one way timed tunnel you should enjoy a descent with no traffic! The ride on offer today is a classic Tour de France route linking St Lary Soulan with Bagneres du Luchon. These towns play a vital part in Le Tour and today you will climb Col d'Azet. Spectacular views are on offer from all vantage points!

From here everyone will enjoy the sweeping descent down to Arreau and some flat kilometres through to St Lary. Enjoy the afternoon in the peaceful town of St Lary. This is one of our favourite French towns with its pretty town centre and access to outdoor sports. With mountains to climb in four directions it is the perfect base for road cyclists!

**Meals:** Breakfast & Dinner included

**Destinations:** Bielsa Tunnel

**Today's Ride:** 90km cycling

**Accommodation:** St Lary Soulan (Pyrenees, France)





## DAY FOUR – Friday 30 August 2019 – Col d’Azet (France)

For those looking for a rest then today is the perfect chance to recuperate before tomorrow’s attack on the Col du Tourmalet. Why not visit the town markets in St Lary Soulan and enjoy a long lunch!

The cycling route on offer takes our cyclists up to Cap d’Long with this mountain reservoir hovering at an astonishing 2160m altitude (France’s second highest reservoir). We are literally only a stone’s throw away from Spain. The Tour de France would love to have a stage finish here but the logistics just do not allow access for such a big event. Anyone who has decided to rest up today should seriously consider joining us in the support vehicles for our picnic lunch in this beautiful landscape! All that now awaits is a fun 20km descent to St Lary!

**Meals:** Breakfast included

**Destinations:** Cap d’Long and Cap d’Aumar mountain reservoirs

**Today’s Ride:** Rest Day or 70km cycling

**Accommodation:** St Lary Soulan (Pyrenees, France)



## DAY FIVE – Saturday 31 August 2019 – Ancizan & Tourmalet (France)

A route for the cycling purists - a double climb straight from the TDF history books! Ancizan is one of our favourite valleys with green lush pastures and it is a pure delight descending down to the road joining Col d'Aspin. From here the descending continues down to the base of the Tourmalet.

Col du Tourmalet is a challenging climb (18km) but the most famous of all TDF 'cols' with over 100 race route passings! A highlight for everyone is greeting the giant structure ('Geant') dedicated to Octave Lapize the first cyclist to cross the Tourmalet during the TDF over a century ago. After the compulsory group and individual photos at the summit you will cruise down the western face of the Tourmalet. Take some speed off this descent as you will want to take in the incredible views as you ride down to Luz St Sauveur.

Many guests decide to take a van transfer to the top of the first Ancizan climb so that they can have enough energy reserves to conquer the Tourmalet!

**Meals:** Breakfast & Dinner included

**Destinations:** Col du Tourmalet & Luz St Sauveur

**Today's Ride:** 100km cycling

**Accommodation:** Argeles Gazost (Pyrenees, France)





## DAY SIX – Sunday 1 September 2019 – Hautacam (France)

The tour hotel sits directly below the towering Hautacam ski station. Hautacam is arguably the toughest climb in the midi-Pyrenees region! Now that is saying something when it competes with Tourmalet, Luz Ardiden and Aubisque! The 16km climb averages 8% but the damage is often done during Km 8 -10 where the grade does not drop below 10%. Vincenzo Nibali went solo during Stage 18 of the 2014 TDF to take line honours on Hautacam!

For those who would like to ride today but avoid the mountains we can ride a 50km warm up loop along the flat valley and asphalted bike paths surrounding Argeles Gazost. Those who want to then attempt Hautacam are free to do so!

**Meals:** Breakfast included

**Destinations:** Hautacam Ski Station

**Today's Ride:** 50km or 80km cycling

**Accommodation:** Argeles Gazost (Pyrenees, France)



## DAY SEVEN – Monday 2 September 2019 – Col d'Aubisque (France)

Cycling from Argeles Gazost one of the great Pyrenees climb doubles is calling us, Col du Soulor and Col d'Aubisque! The **hors categorie Col d'Aubisque climb** has been passed 45 times during the Tour de France making it the second most used climb in race history. After first passing Col du Soulor you will cycle the dramatic mountain road which links the Soulor and Aubisque summits. The road breathtakingly hugs the cliffs of the Cirque du Litor, passes two striking tunnels and is simply a cycling experience like no other! On reaching Aubisque take some time to soak up your great achievement and enjoy some fun photos with the giant TDF inspired bikes found at the summit!

This afternoon there will be a 2hr van transfer back into Navarra province in the Spanish Pyrenees! You will sleep in the sleepy village of Isaba (Irati Forest) which is one of our favourite cycling bases in Spain.

**Meals:** Breakfast & Dinner included

**Destinations:** French & Spanish Pyrenees

**Today's Ride:** 90km cycling

**Accommodation:** Isaba (Navarra, Spain)





## DAY EIGHT – Tuesday 3 September 2019 – Irati Forest (Spain)

The Irati Forest is one of Spain's best kept secrets! Wild mountains, gorges, fast flowing rivers and lush farmland provide the perfect backdrop for road cycling. After a day cycling through this region you will understand why Spanish cycling legend Miguel Indurain found it so easy to spend hours training on his bike.

For those wanting a relatively easy ride today there is a 55km hotel loop which in many ways resembles the Italian Dolomites for scenery. A challenge awaits those who are game with the optional 15km climb called 'Piedra de St Martin'. This is the same mountain pass where Chris Froome won the Stage 10 summit finish during the 2015 Tour de France!

Now all that remains is a wonderful descent back into Spain and the Irati Forest.

**Meals:** Breakfast included

**Destinations:** Ochagavia & Irati Forest

**Today's Ride:** 85km cycling

**Accommodation:** Isaba (Navarra, Spain)

## DAY NINE – Wednesday 4 September 2019 – San Sebastian (Spain)

It may be the final day on the bikes but the spectacular scenery does not let up just yet! The route takes you out of the Irati Forest and onto the quiet backroads towards Pamplona. Winding roads which pass reservoirs and woodlands is what awaits you today. Following the ride we will have a 1hr 15min to San Sebastian and your arrival to Basque Country.

San Sebastian is famous for its Concha Beach and medieval old town serving endless supplies of delicious pintxos (tapas outside of Basque Country)! Let's just say that past clients have not had any problems spending a few extra days in San Sebastian! If you need any assistance with post-tour accommodation feel free to ask us!

**Meals:** Breakfast & Dinner included

**Destinations:** Pamplona & San Sebastian

**Today's Ride:** 85km cycling

**Accommodation:** San Sebastian (Basque Country, Spain)

## DAY TEN – Thursday 5 September 2019 – Goodbyes

Following breakfast the guides will depart the hotel. If you would like a van transfer to Madrid please feel free to join us. It is quite a long 5hr drive. Otherwise there are many airport connections from nearby Bilbao.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## TRIP DETAILS

**REGION:** PYRENEES (Spain & France)

**PRICE:** 3450 € p.p.

**TOUR DATES:** 27 AUG - 5 SEPT 2019

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:** 600 €

**DURATION:** 10 DAYS / 9 NIGHTS

**OPTIONAL EXTRAS:**

Carbon Road Bike Hire: 350 €

**HOTELS:** Boltaña (x2), St Lary Soulan (x2), Argeles (x2), Isaba (x2), San Sebastian (x1); 3/4 Star Hotels

### INCLUDED

Van transport  
9 nights accommodation (twin share)  
9 breakfasts  
5 dinners (with beer & wine included)  
9 guided cycling stages with van and mechanic  
Food & drinks during cycling stages  
Commemorative Pyrenees cycling jersey

### NOT INCLUDED

Airfares & Train Tickets  
Pre or post Tour Accommodation