

SEVEN OF THE BEST CYCLING DESTINATIONS IN EUROPE



Cyclists come in all shapes and sizes, from the casual rider wanting to enjoy the gentle country roads with family and friends to the enthusiast that sees a welcome challenge in new hills and looks to ride with other, equally enthusiastic individuals. The following list of seven of the best cycling destinations in Europe shows that there really is a route somewhere on the continent for everyone - from history buff to cultural connoisseur and competitor. Tourism Review

introduces top seven cycling destination throughout Europe.

The Danube Bike Path.

The first example is definitely one for that first group of cyclists, the family wanting a pleasant scenic ride rather than a challenge. While it is true that the course does get a little rougher the further it moves away from the river's source to the Black Sea, some of the beginning stages are wonderful gentle and ideal for those that do not want to think about the terrain too much. The entire Danube route may be a bit excessive for smaller legs but a section between Germany and Budapest is ideal because of the quality of the paved trail.

Gran Fondo Campagnolo, Italy.

At the other end of the scale - in terms of the terrain and the mentality of the rider that wishes to ride upon it - this Italian route offer a real challenge and a chance for riders across Europe to come together in their love of the sport. Every June, just after the route becomes safe enough to tackle, masses of cyclists ascend the Dolomites at a climb of more than 4,200 metres to commemorate Tullio Campagnolo's invention of the derailleur.

Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy.

Before continuing across the continent to France, it is worth mentioning another little Italian cycling gem over in the country's north-east corner. This region is another one for the casual rider that would rather pay attention to the scenery than the terrain and would rather stop to admire the culture and cuisine than make good time on a course. This hilly region is not too taxing for amateur riders and is full of these tempting stopping points with its beautiful stretch of Istrian coastline and local wine producers.

Luberon and Mont Ventoux, France.

The hills of the Italian coast may be relaxing but things get a little more challenging again over in these vast stretches of Provence. There are still plenty of sights to enjoy along the route, such as the Roman ruins and typical chateaux that are a must-see item on the lists of many visitors to France; however, with hundreds of kilometres of bike paths to explore on the slopes this for more of an adventurous spirit. For those that really want a challenge there is also Mont Ventoux, a beacon to all enthusiasts and followers of the Tour de France for its sense of drama.

Luchon to Bayonne, France

It is natural to think of the Tour de France when considering cycling and Europe and the race - both in its history and its routes - has inspired riders and drawn them in for decades. This is why another route related to this competition makes the list. The section from Luchon to Bayonne is infamously difficult; in 1910 it took the winner 14 hours to manage the 325 km of treacherous mountain surface. Today this route from Peyresourde, Aspin, Tourmalet, and Aubisque is much more manageable and is a must for those that enjoy the history and challenges of the sport.

The Isle Of Wight, UK

Heading further west, away from the mountains and snow there is an island that could not be more different in its terrain and offerings but was surely made for cyclists in the same way. The Isle of Wight is full of hills, coastal routes and country lanes waiting to be explored and while there are routes that are recommended, it is ideal for exploring with nothing but a map and a vague aim of a destination, such as one of the many pubs, scenic views and other tourist attractions on this ever-evolving island.

County Clare, Ireland.

This final offering on the coast of Ireland is much like the routes of Friuli-Venezia Giulia and the Danube in the way it offers a gentle pace for cultural exploration - the towns of Milltown Malbay and Doolin offering plenty of entertainment and refreshment - but it also has the variety of terrain and scenery of the Isle of Wight with its combination of lowlands, coastal paths and expansive countryside. This looping stretch from the Shannon estuary past the Burren and deep into County Clare may not be challenging but it does have something for most riders.

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