



Traverse of the Alps from Chamonix to the Sea

From Chamonix to Nice via Briançon
in 2 stages of 6 days



Stage 1: From Chamonix to Briançon

Imagine the ultimate Mountain Biking trip... traversing the French Alps starting from the highest peak in Europe, Mont Blanc 4810m, and arriving at the Mediterranean Sea... 650 km... 20,000 meters of climb and more than 15 alpine cols... Breathtaking scenery, fantastic singletracks, beautiful quaint, old remote villages, great food and a super ambiance... What else do we need for a epic tour???

We propose for you to join us on this amazing and challenging trip in two stages of 6 days with the final reward... a "plouf" in the 'big blue' at Nice...

You want adventure, great Mountain Biking, amazing singletracks and un-crowded places??? Join us on the 'Traverse of the Alps'... Chamonix to the sea!

We will start from Chamonix and ride through the Beaufortain, Tarentaise, Maurienne and Cerces areas, relatively unknown Mountain Biking areas and continue on to the historic fortified town of Briançon. This itinerary offers fantastic scenery and great riding giving just a taste of the next stage of the 'Traverse of the Alps'. 240km of awesome Mountain Biking awaits you...

Description

Traverse of the Alps from Chamonix to the Sea – Stage 1, From Chamonix to Briançon

Level

Strong Intermediate to Advanced, 'all-round' rider. High fitness level required and capable of pushing/carrying bike. Good bike handling skills. Ability to ride technical singletracks.

Terrain

All kinds of terrain! Cruising two path trails, easy singletracks, technical and challenging singletracks, some rocky and 'rooty' trails.

Location

Starting from Chamonix to Briançon

Accommodation

7 nights accommodation in a mix of remote and rural gites to small hotels and bunkhouses

Included

7 nights accommodation, all meals from dinner of arrival day to breakfast of departure day, daily picnic lunches on riding days, guiding, daily luggage transfer to accommodation, arrival transfer from Geneva airport to Chamonix and departure transfer to Briançon train station for clients not completing Stage 2 to Nice.

Not Included

Flights/Travel etc. Expenses of repair and maintenance of bikes, cancellation/medical insurances and repatriation costs, bike hire, personal energy drinks and bars, alcohol and generally all that is not included/understood in the heading Included.

Physical & Technical Skill Level (out of 5)

Physical Fitness: 3/5 to 4/5

Technical Skills: 3/5 to 4/5

Dates 2010

Price: 980 euros

The Schedule: arrival on Saturday and collection from Geneva airport or meet in Chamonix

Day 1 (Sunday): Chamonix to Beaufort

We start under the shadow of Mont Blanc and head towards Les Houches where we take the first ski lift of the day. Followed by a nice easy descent to Les Contamines Montjoie to take a second lift to bring us up to the Col du Joly. From here we enter into the Beaufortain

area with its large open alpine flowered pastures and splendid singletracks. We pass next to the Lac of Girotte and finish for the day in the village of Beaufort.

Ride distance: 50km.

Uneven positive: 1100m Uneven negative: 1800m

Day 2 (Monday): Beaufort to the Tarentaise valley

Our second day in the Beaufortain area will be quite tough. Three cols await us today and 1800m of climb... Amazing alpine ambiance with the Mont Blanc and its glaciers at our backs and the trails passing through lush meadows, with only the cows to greet us. The reward for the big climb, is a fantastic downhill descent of 2000m towards the Tarentaise Valley with a mix of technical singletrack, jeep tracks and flowing trails. A great day Mountain Biking!

Ride distance: 45km

Uneven positive: 1800m Uneven negative: 2200m

Day 3 (Tuesday): From the Tarentaise valley to the Maurienne valley

Today we will contour the beautiful Vanoise National Parc (unfortunately forbidden to Mountain Bikes) passing by the Col de la Madeleine from where we can see the beautiful glaciers of the Aiguille de Pecllet (3561m) and Aiguille de Polset (3511m). We access the Maurienne valley by another great descent and arrive to Saint Jean de Maurienne.

Ride distance: 40km

Uneven positive: 1300m Uneven negative: 1500m

Day 4 (Wednesday): From Saint Jean de Maurienne, today and tomorrow are going to be mainly ascents to pass into the next valley of Nevache, so that is 3200 of climb in two days! The day starts with a gentle warm up of 1400m of ascent ;-), a mix of road and jeep tracks with a short 'hike-a-bike' section at the end to reach the ski resort of Karrellys. From here a splendid view over the Maurienne valley opens up, so you realise the climb you've just done! Then a huge traverse on undulating jeep tracks and singletracks, leading us to the village of Valloire, renown as a regular route of the Tour de France.

Ride distance: 45km

Uneven positive: 1900m Uneven negative: 400m

Day 5 (Thursday): From Valloire we will start climbing the famous road towards the Col du Galibier (one of the most difficult climbs in the Tour de France). From here we will traverse the alpine range of Mont Thabor (3178m) passing the alpine lakes of Grand Ban and Lac Rond at 2500m, then descend on a technical in places singletrack into the splendid quiet valley of Nevache. A second 600metre climb will bring us up onto a traversing balcony trail above the Nevache valley for yet another fantastic final singletrack descent of the day to the village of Nevache.

Ride distance: 40 km

Uneven positive: 1600m Uneven negative: 1500m

Day 6 (Friday): The last but by no means the least! A final climb of 1000metres on a jeep track in the beautiful Granon valley, allows us to pass into the Briançon valley, riding almost hanging over the valley side. Finishing with the super amazing 'natural pipe' descent of Bois de l'ours (the wood of the bear) and arriving directly to a bar to order a well deserved beer to finish this first epic stage of the 'Traverse of the Alps' Chamonix to the sea!

Day 7 (Saturday): two choices... you stop here or you keep heading South with us for a swim in the Mediterranean Sea in a week's time...

If you choose to stop, we can drop you to Briançon train station where you can get a train to Grenoble and on to Grenoble or Geneva airports.

We hope to see you again to complete the second stage another time...

NB: this tour is run with a minimum of 4 clients, lunch on Saturday of arrival and Saturday of departure are not included, but can be arranged at an additional cost.