

One of the most common pre-trip questions we receive is all about what to pack, and what the essential items are. This is a list of recommended kit to take on this cycle. We have tried to pare down this kit list to the absolute must-haves for your ride, but above all you should use your common sense and your own personal preferences when you are packing. Check out our additional guidelines at the bottom of this list!

RUCKSACKS AND BAGS

- Day sack/bum bag/handle bar bag
- Large Rucksack/Duffle bag
- Waterproof liner*

CYCLING GEAR

- Cycling Helmet (must be worn at all times while cycling)
- Cycling shorts x 2/3
- Cycling Jersey x 3
- Cycling tights for colder conditions
- Lightweight windproof gilet or jacket
- Cycling gloves
- Cycling glasses (preferably with interchangeable clear/tinted lenses)
- Water bottles for bike
- Chamois Cream
- Bike bell
- Gel seat*

FOOTWEAR

- Comfy footwear for cycling
- Socks at least 5 pairs
- Training/comfy shoe/flip flops for evenings
- Cycling shoes, cleats & pedals*
- Waterproof overshoes*

CLOTHING

- Warm base layer
- Lightweight fleece top
- Comfy clothing for evening
- Buff for the cold
- Smart clothes for the celebratory meal*

BIKE KIT

- Own bike!
- Bike computer with charger
- LED lights
- 2 x water bottles and cages
- Puncture repair kit and pump
- Spare inner tubes x 2/3
- Camelbak*
- Spare cleats*

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

- High energy snacks (tracker bars, dried fruit, chocolate, nuts)
- Plastic bags for keeping clothes and docs dry
- Camera*
- Contact lenses (plus spare glasses)*
- Alarm clock/watch*
- Ear plugs*

SMALL FIRST AID KIT

- Chamois cream
- Pain killers
- Plasters
- Zinc oxide tape
- Compeed blister pads
- Antiseptic wipes
- Your own medication
- Deep heat*
- Knee supporters*

TOILETRIES

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, babywipes, lip salve
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Deodorant
- Aftersun/moisturiser
- Sun protection (min factor 30)

- Travel towel
- Dextrose tablets for extra energy*

DOCUMENTS

- Passport
- Visa
- Tickets (given to you at the airport)
- Photocopy of passport
- Cash in Euro's
- Debit card
- Travel insurance

KEY * Indicates Optional

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR KIT

PACKING

Remember the general rule that if you don't need it, don't bring it. A soft duffel is easier to find your kit in and less likely to be damaged than a framed backpack and should weigh no more than 15kg, so don't overpack!

On a bike a decent bum-bag is hard to beat for carrying valuables and essentials. Protect valuables from rain with a small rolltop dry bag.

CLOTHES

A pair of padded cycling shorts will make a huge difference to your comfort (to be worn without underwear) and dedicated cycle gloves help to protect your hands while in the saddle.

OWN BIKE

If you have an expensive frame we advise you to either have a bike bag or purchase some 'pipe insulation' to protect your bike in the support truck on the way back to London. Whilst every care is taken, we cannot accept liability for any damage

SUN PROTECTION

To protect yourself from the sun use a lightweight peaked cap that's comfortable under your helmet and at other times wear a wide brimmed hat. On a bike the back of your neck and the back of your legs are more exposed than usual, don't forget sunscreen on these areas.

HYDRATION

When exercising your fluid needs increase dramatically and adequate hydration is vital. There are various ways to get the right fluids into your body, with many people using water bladders or bottles. Another alternative is a widemouth bottle with a drinking tube adaptor. Adding oral rehydration tablets or electrolyte powders to your water helps to maintain a correct electrolyte balance and also makes your water more palatable. Make sure you follow the mixing instructions on the pack and wash bottles and bladders thoroughly after use because the nutrients can help promote bacterial and mould growth.

HEALTH

Make sure you take a first-aid kit with you, as the group medical kit is designed for emergencies. Zinc Oxide tape is a handy addition, as it is often a lifesaver for blisters. Good hand hygiene is very important on any sort of challenge and will help to prevent tummy problems. Wash your hands whenever you eat and use Dry Wash Gel when washing facilities are not available.

Chamois cream will help stop you getting saddle sore. You can use Vaseline/Sudocrem which are cheaper – make sure you use lots of it BEFORE you get sore. Specialised creams for cyclists such as ASSOS are more expensive but are designed specifically for the purpose. They form more of a barrier so are better at preventing chafing (a £10 tub should last most trips). Also use the cream on other areas that may rub.