

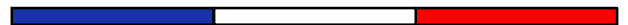
# Lake Annecy

French Alps



# SIERRA

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## LAKE ANNECY



[Day 2: Col du Pre]

### Lake Annecy – Venice of the Alps!

The region surrounding Lake Annecy simply put is a cycling paradise. Every year the Criterium du Dauphine and Tour de France professional cycling races spend multiple stages in this spectacular region. You have probably heard of famous climbs, such as, La Semnoz, Col du Grand Cucheron, Col de la Croix de Fry, Col de la Colombiere, Col de Aravis and Col de la Forclaz which are all within a 50km radius of Annecy!

The tour program presented ticks all of the above big climbs but also includes many lesser known shorter climbs. There are many enjoyable 7-10km climbs in the area with impressive mountain views of l'Etale (2500m), Tournette (2350m) and Mt Blanc (4810) peaks at every corner. The views down to the emerald waters of Lake Annecy, Emosson and Roselend are also major highlights for those keen on photography & descending.

Return home with a bulging CV of famous TDF climbs! You will also have the opportunity to ride Cormet de Roselend, Col de l'Epine & Col de Leschaux!





[Day 7: Lac d'Emosson]

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Cycle key climbs from the Dauphine & Tour de France pro races
- Cycle around Lake Annecy via the Mountains
- Enjoy breathtaking descents with Col du Pre to Lake Roselend one to remember!
- Warm-up on the Annecy to Albertville bike path
- Test yourself on several unknown European cols (Col de Tamie, Col de la Gueulaz, Col de l'Epine & Col de Aravis)
- Relax for 6 nights in the one cycling base in Annecy
- Cycle on quiet roads after the Dauphine and before Le Tour
- Eat all the cheese you like (home of the Tomme & Reblochon varieties)

## ITINERARY

### **DAY ONE – Sunday 24 June 2018 – Geneva, Switzerland**

We would be available to meet you near Geneva International Airport anytime from 9am onwards. In our experience arriving at least one night before the tour start date is a good idea as it helps with any jet lag and also means that we can fit-in a good afternoon cycling route for Day One as well! From Geneva it would be a 45 minute transfer to Lake Annecy. [Note: Lyon Airport is another arrival option but is a 2hr transfer to Lake Annecy].

Lake Annecy will be the cycling base for the next 6 nights. The lake and township are surrounded by inspiring mountain peaks. During the afternoon there will be time for a tour briefing, set-up the bikes and head out for a test ride along the designated bike path (see below).



**Today's Ride:** 70 km / 1000m elevation gain

**Accommodation:** Annecy

## DAY TWO – Monday 25 June 2018 – Col du Pre & Lake Roselend

Today the cycling begins on the dedicated bike path between Annecy and Albertville. Before arriving to Albertville we will detour towards Beaufort where your first Category 1 climb awaits! The legs will be ready for the 20.3km climb to Cornet de Roselend which will also include Col du Pre along the way (two cols for the price of one!). The climb ascends 1230 m (average grade of 6.0%) with the steepest sections at 10.0%. The pass has appeared in the TDF on 9 occasions! It was first included in 1979 and was most recently used during Stage 17 of the 2009 TDF.

It is not all about climbing though because the descent from Col du Pre to the dam wall at Lake Roselend is something you will remember for the rest of your cycling days!

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Today's Ride:** 100km cycling / 2000m elevation gain

**Accommodation:** Annecy

## DAY THREE – Tuesday 26 June 2018 – Col de la Croix Fry

After breakfast there will be a 30min van transfer east of Annecy. Do not let today's shorter distance fool you though as there are four climbs that provide some of the best mountain views in Europe! The first three climbs are around the 6-8km length with approx. 400m of elevation gain each (Col de Aravis, Col des Esserrieux and Col du Marais). All of these are perfect teasers for Col de la Croix de Fry which at 11.4km and 820m elevation gain is the main test for the day. With four (4) TDF crossings, the latest during Stage 19 of the 2013 race edition, it will be easy to understand its inclusion as the impressive views of l'Etale and Tournette mountain peaks provide divine background distractions.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Today's Ride:** 80km cycling / 2000m elevation gain

**Accommodation:** Annecy



## DAY FOUR – Wednesday 27 June 2018 – La Semnoz

Cycling from the hotel and you will ride into the heart of the Reserve Nationale de Chasse des Bauges. This national park occupies the south west corner of Lake Annecy and provides yet another amazing vantage point of the lake at altitude (1660m)! The ride in-store for you is another classic which we have designed and ridden which incorporates two critical TDF mountains; La Semnoz and Col du Grand Cucheron. The 'Grand Cucheron' though will be left as an optional extra should the group wish to test themselves on a second climb today.

La Semnoz (also known as Cret de Chatillan) has five different ascents from Annecy, however, today you will ride the western approach used during Stage 20 of the 2013 TDF. Nairo Quintana in his TDF debut won this penultimate stage with an attack just outside the final kilometre which Chris Froome and Joaquin Rodriguez were unable to match! The only other time the TDF has visited La Semnoz was during the neutralised stage in 1998 after the breaking of La Festina doping scandal.

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Today's Ride:** 100km cycling / 1500m elevation gain

**Accommodation:** Annecy

[Day 4: Le Semnoz]



## DAY FIVE – Thursday 28 June 2018 – Col de la Colombiere

This morning you ride north-east from Annecy in search of one of the legendary TDF climbs; Col de la Colombiere! With 21 TDF race crossings these quiet mountain roads provide the perfect setting for writing some of your own cycling history. The likes of Pantani, Virenque & Frank Schleck have all been first to lead the peloton over this pass! Its 11.7km and 700m of elevation gain is a solid challenge for the day and was last used during Stage 20 of the 2016 TDF!



[Day 5: Col de la Colombiere: 2009 - Contador & Schleck brothers]

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Today's Ride:** 90km cycling / 1900m elevation gain

**Accommodation:** Annecy

## DAY SIX – Friday 29 June 2018 – Lake Annecy via the mountains

The roads directly around Lake Annecy are typically busy so we will head to elevation for our 'mountain loop' of the lake. This route will have very low traffic and includes three cols; Col de Tamie, Col de l'Epine and Col de la Forclaz. After clearing these three passes you will have every angle of the eastern side of the lake covered!

The climb of real interest today though is Col de la Forclaz (Montmin). It has a formidable reputation both for its difficulty and beauty. Its views are second to none and no wonder it is one of the premier paragliding and hang gliding sites in Europe! The climb itself is only 8.2km long with an average grade of 8%. The short downhill hill section though about 2km to the summit means there are several extended 13% maximum ramps up to the top!

When it comes to Le Tour the pro peloton has passed 'Forclaz' four times the last being during Stage 19 of the 2016 race edition.



[Day 6: Col de la Forclaz Montmin]

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Today's Ride:** 105km cycling / 1900m elevation gain

**Accommodation:** Annecy



## **DAY SEVEN – Sat 30 June 2018 – Lake d’Emosson via Chamonix**

After a long week of cycling we will see how everyone is feeling today before setting the final route and distance. What we do already know though is that we have saved the best views for last!

From the hotel there will be a short van transfer (maximum 1 hour) in the direction of Chamonix-Mont Blanc. Chamonix is well known as one of the main adventure capitals in Europe! Cycling has not always been mainstream Mt Blanc news but after the 2016 Tour de France prepared a surprise Stage 17 summit finish on Col de la Gueulax the cycling world began to take notice! The stage finished at 1965m elevation near the Lake d’Emosson dam wall and provided background views of the Mt Blanc massif towering at 4810m elevation (the highest peak in western Europe)!



[Day 7: Lac d’Emosson]

Following today’s ride your Sierra guides will be able to transfer you during the late afternoon from Chamonix to the Geneva International Airport / hotel area where the cycling tour first started (1hr 15min drive). From here we will say our goodbyes before you continue on your own adventures!

Depending on interest the opportunity exists to take the Aiguille du Midi cable car from Chamonix (1035m). This is a truly unique sightseeing experience as the cable car rises over the forest to reach le Plan de l'Aiguille in 10 minutes (2317m). Glacier des Bossons, Mont-Blanc (4810m), Aiguille Verte, the Drus and the Aiguilles de Chamonix all in front of your eyes. A second cable car in a further 10 minutes takes you up to 3777m, over the seracs, the glacier des Pelerins and the hanging glaciers on the north face of the Aiguille du Midi.



[Optional - Day 7: Aiguille du Midi Cable Car from Chamonix]

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Today's Ride:** Minimum 50km cycling option