



DOLOMITES CYCLING TOUR

Italian Alps: Venice to Milan (Via Stelvio & Como)



2024 Dolomites & Stelvio Cycling Tour

Cycling from Venice to Milan

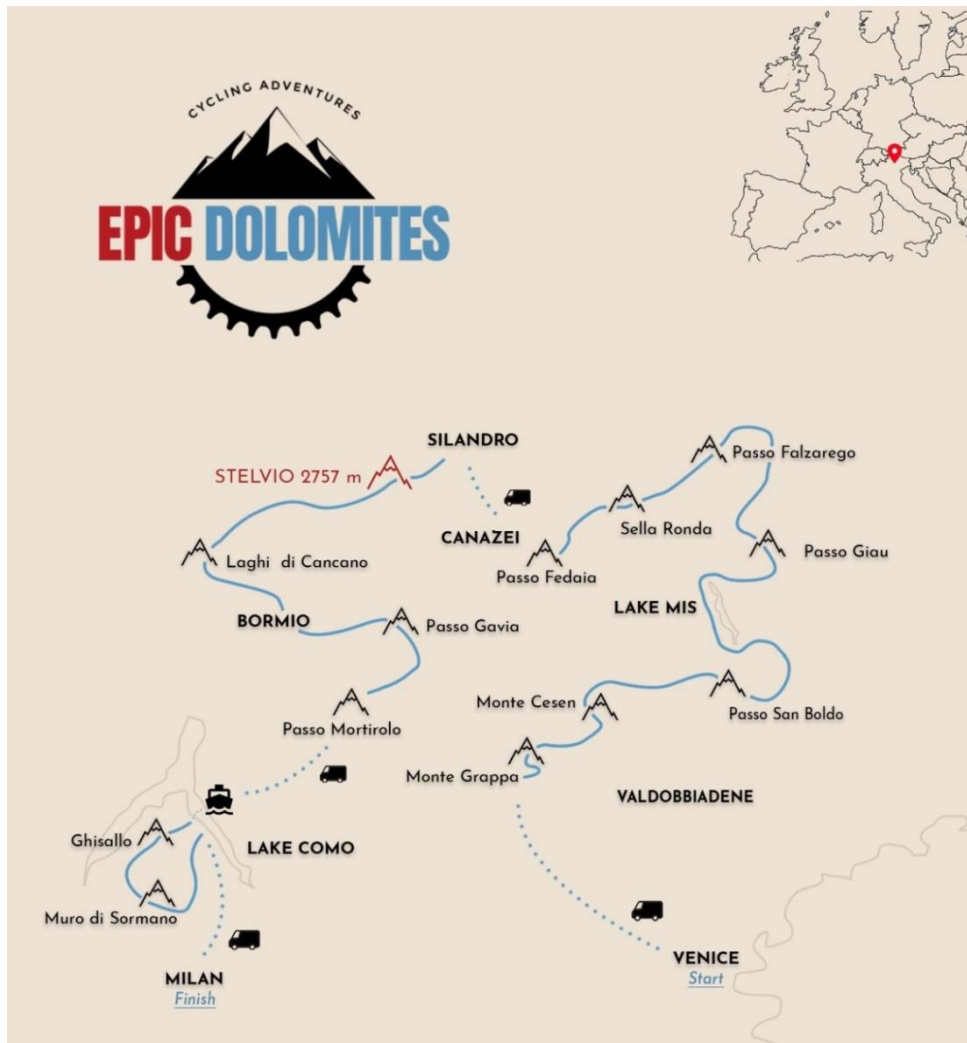
Welcome to the roads of cycling legends! This cycling tour will take you through the Veneto Prosecco wine region, up and over the epic Dolomites and Stelvio National Parks before finishing on the beautiful shores of Lake Como.

During 2024 we start our cycling tour in Venice and finish in Milan. This tour is perfect for cyclists who would like to challenge themselves on some of Europe's biggest climbs. You will enjoy amazing bucket list climbs, such as, Sella Ronda (Pordoi, Sella, Gardena & Campolongo), Passo Giau, Passo Fedaiia, Passo dello Stelvio, Passo Gavia and Passo Mortirolo! The tour has also been designed to give you the time to relax and enjoy northern Italy. With multiple nights in Bassano del Grappa, Arabba, Bormio and Bellagio there will be many opportunities to soak up the Italian summer and explore this beautiful part of the world at a leisurely pace!

The Dolomites are not the only region in Italy with famous climbs. As a special treat, escapes to tackle Monte Grappa, Passo San Boldo, Passo Ghisallo and the Sormano Wall also await. From the mythical Giro d'Italia roads to the race defining climbs from Giro di Lombardia this tour has it all!

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Time trial the **Monte Grappa** ascent like Nairo Quintana
- ✓ Ride the 5 crazy tunnelled switchbacks over **San Boldo Pass**
- ✓ Follow the limestone rocky peaks around the **Sella massif!**
- ✓ Test your legs on **Passo Giau** and its toughest southern approach
- ✓ Conquer His Majesty the **Stelvio Pass** – Europe's 2nd highest paved pass!
 - ✓ Celebrate your achievements on **Lake Como!**



ITINERARY

DAY ONE – Tuesday 9 July 2024 – Venice to Bassano

This morning we can collect you from Venice (Marco Polo Airport or Annia Park Hotel Venice Airport) at approximately 10:00am. Following a 1hr transfer we arrive to Bassano del Grappa. There will be time to build any bikes and get you fitted on hire bikes.

During the afternoon get excited as you can test yourself on the famous Foza climb. The 14.8km climb at 6.4% average grade is a good starter as it's a fairly constant climb with tens of impressive switchbacks that rise up from the valley floor. The 100th edition of the Giro d'Italia showcased the Foza climb during its decisive Stage 20 mountainous route!

During the evening we will go through a tour briefing and welcome dinner with the guides. Some epic cycling awaits!

Meals

Dinner

Destinations

Foza

Today's Ride

55km cycling / 750m elevation gain

Accommodation

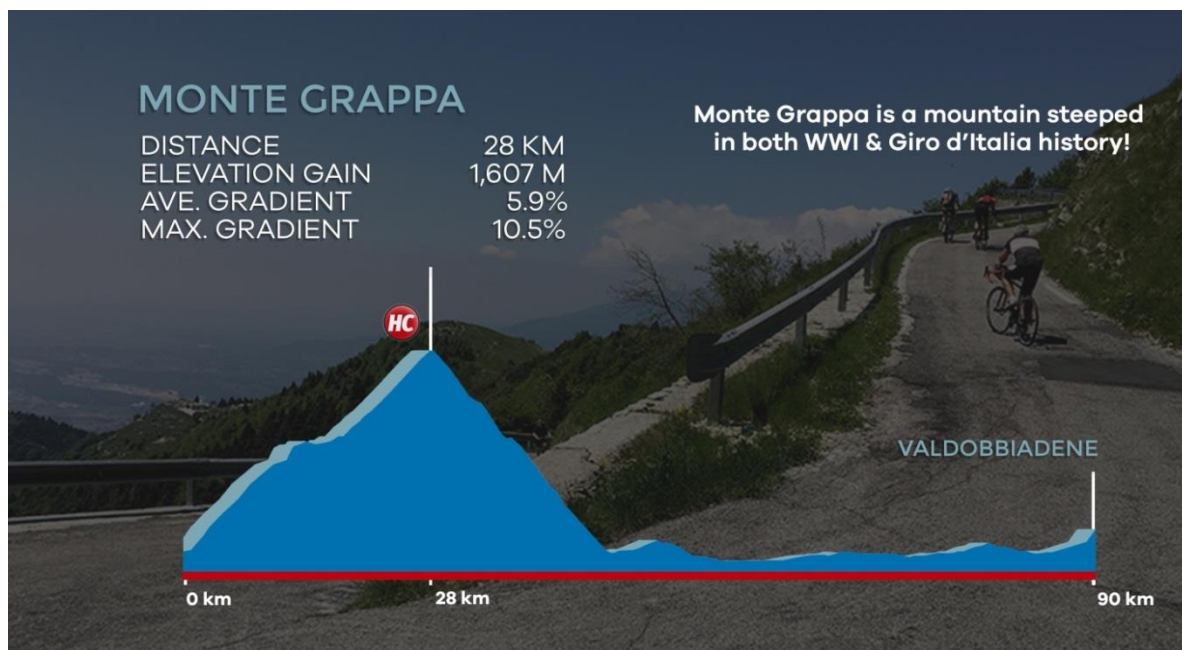
Bassano del Grappa (Veneto, Italy)



DAY TWO – Wednesday 10 July 2024 – Monte Grappa

Today you will cycle a brilliant loop through the rolling hills of the Prosecco and Cartize wine area. Following the landscapes of Italy's prized sparkling wine will be a major highlight. For those looking for a challenge the ride passes by the base of Monte Grappa. Bang! This is a classic Giro d'Italia climb. For Italian cyclists, riding Grappa is a tradition and for many just as important as the Stelvio Pass. It is the location where the Italian troops held back the constant attacks of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies during WWI and where the famous motto "You Shall Not Pass Here" was born.

The climb rises out of the Veneto plain and measures 27km at an average gradient of 6%. The Giro d'Italia has visited Monte Grappa (1775m) on 6 occasions and was last used during Stage 20 of the 2017 edition. Hosting the penultimate stage of 'Giro 100' is saying something about its national importance!



Why Epic?

Monte Grappa has 11 different categorised climbs to the summit and is well known for its 'Brevetto del Grappa' where cyclists set out to climb all 11 ascents. For locals it might be over the year while for travellers over a week is a good effort.

Meals

Breakfast

Destinations

Monte Grappa

Today's Ride

90km / 1850m elevation gain

Accommodation

Bassano del Grappa (Veneto, Italy)

DAY THREE – Thursday 11 July 2024 – Passo San Boldo

Riding from the hotel and you encounter some stunning scenery on the Passo San Boldo climb. The road near the summit includes a series of five switchback tunnels carved into the rock! The 6km climb at 7.5% average was last contested during Stage 19 of the 2019 Giro d'Italia which an emotional Esteban Chaves went on to win! Rolling across the top of the plateau offers incredible views to the distant Dolomites. Is that snow we often get asked? No, there you have the limestone peaks of the soaring Dolomites! After a coffee stop the cycling continues along the edge of 'Lago del Mis' which is a fantastic experience!

Why Epic?

The San Boldo road was built during the First World War by the Austro-Hungarian army in less than 100 days. In war nobody wins, but in this case, we are lucky to have one of the world's most spectacular cycling routes!

Meals

Breakfast & Dinner

Destinations

Lago del Mis

Today's Ride

90km / 1750m elevation gain

Accommodation

Arabba (Dolomites, Italy)

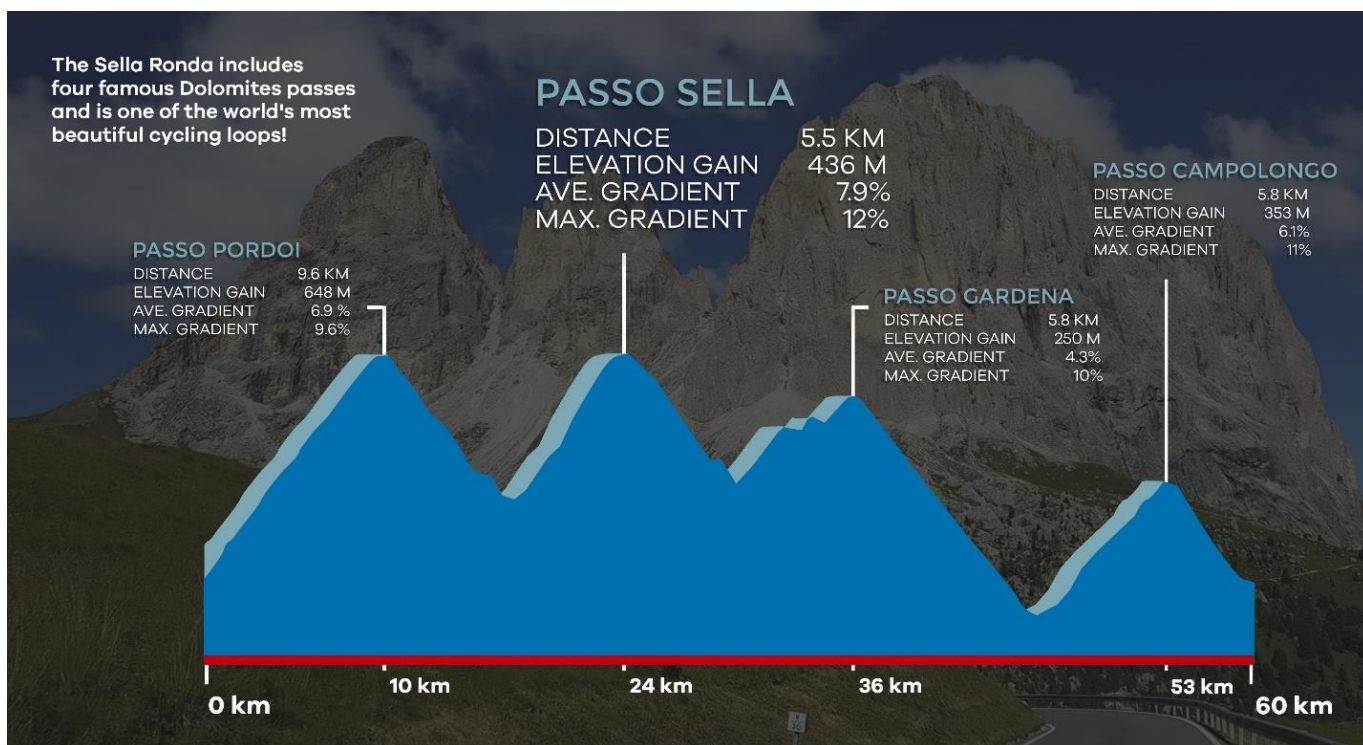


DAY FOUR – Friday 12 July 2024 – Sella Ronda

One of the world’s most iconic cycling routes is on offer today: the Sella Ronda loop!! The Sella Ronda is a must for any cyclist who visits the towering Dolomites mountain region. There are 4 steps to become a member of the Sella Ronda club: Passo Pordoi, Passo Sella, Passo Gardena and Passo Campolongo. The views of the jagged limestone peaks, pine forests, alpine meadows and winding roads will be etched into your memory for a lifetime!

1. Pordoi: 9.2 km, Gradient: 6.9%
2. Sella: 5.5 km, Gradient: 7.9%
3. Gardena: 5.8 km, Gradient: 4.3%
4. Campolongo: 5.8 km, Gradient: 6.1%

Don’t let the relatively low kilometre count trick you today as each pass goes accumulating elevation, almost 1850m of elevation gain! We often find that Day 4 can be difficult for some on tour so the Sella loop will provide excellent motivation and also the chance for an early ride finish and afternoon of important recovery.



Why Epic?

The Sella Ronda is the core of the 'Maratona dles Dolomites' gran fondo cycling event. 9000 riders line up every year to tackle the Maratona which is described by National Geographic as "one of the biggest, most passionate, and most chaotic bike races on Earth". Riding around the Sella Massif is about as good as it gets for mountain scenery!

Meals

Breakfast

Destinations

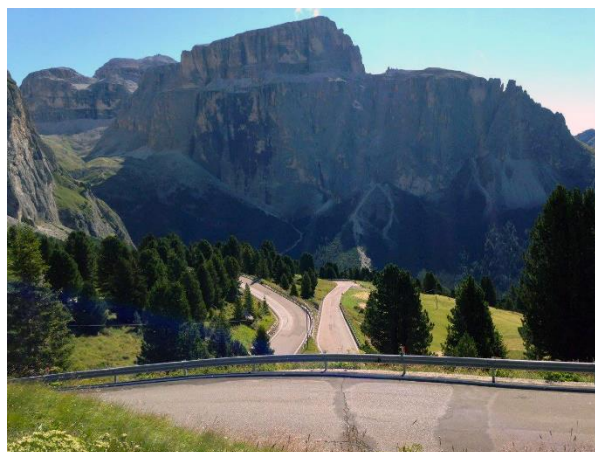
Corvara

Today's Ride

Min. 60km / 1850m elevation gain

Accommodation

Arabba (Dolomites, Italy)



DAY FIVE – Saturday 13 July 2024 – Passo Giau & Fedaiia

Today is the perfect chance to enter deeper into the heart of the national park for more classic Dolomites climbs. For all the Giro d'Italia tragics out there you would have heard about the southern approach of Passo Giau! For most cyclists who have travelled Italy in and out 'Passo Giau South' will be in their top 10 climbs. This beauty measures 9.5km and the 9.4% average grade takes you up to 2236 metres elevation. A little like Alpe d'Huez in the French Alps, Km 1 of this pass is its toughest with ramps constantly reading 10-12%. At the summit you will be in awe of the seemingly sculptured mountain peaks surrounding you (Nuvolau, Lastoni del Formin, Cenera, Croda da Lago and Tofane). This could well be your most scenic coffee stop yet!

For those keen to ride some more there will be the chance to also climb Passo Fedaiia. 'Fedaiia' is a classic climb and it was last used during Stage 20 of the 2022 Giro d'Italia when Jai Hindley craftily left Richard Carapaz for dead in the last 4km and won the coveted maglia rosa. To make things really interesting we hope to ride through the Sottoguda canyon at the base of the eastern Fedaiia ascent, but this will depend on whether the road has been repaired and open again to cyclists. Some big floods a few winters back washed away the magical road in the canyon. Either way there will be a 14km climb up to the majestic Fedaiia lakes which were used as the backdrop to the 'Italian Job' movie.

After marvelling at the Marmolada glacier, a fun descent down to Canazei for lunch awaits before a 2hr van transfer to near the base of the Stelvio Pass. Yes, the Stelvio Pass! Tomorrow is a big day visiting His Majesty so we all need to make sure we are in good condition to give it our all!

Why Epic?

Passo Giau has been chosen various times as the Cima Coppi (the highest peak) in the Giro d'Italia cycling race.

It is the highest mountain pass in the Cortina area and when combined with Passo Fedaiia makes for our Queen stage through the Dolomites!

Meals

Breakfast & Dinner

Destinations

Passo Giau

Today's Ride

90km / 2000m elevation gain

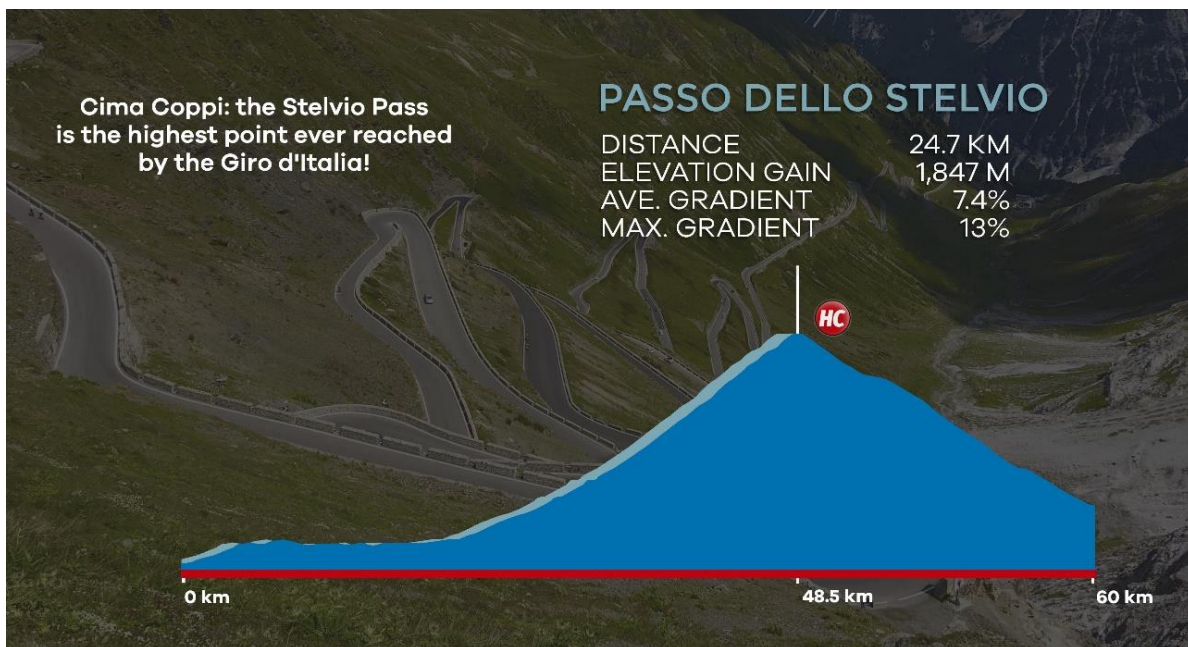
Accommodation

Silandro (Bolzano, Italy)

DAY SIX – Sunday 14 July 2024 – Passo dello Stelvio

From Silandro you will warm-up on a 20km route through the apple orchards and woodlands. Now you will need to be ready to climb the mythical Stelvio north side with its 48 hairpin bends that rise up and up for 25km and which gain 1840 metres of elevation. Passo Stelvio (2758m) is the highest asphalted mountain pass in the Eastern Alps, second only to Col de l'Iseran (2770m) in the French Alps in elevation and with more than twice the number of switchbacks as the famous Alpe d' Huez. The climb is epic in every sense of the definition. At the top you can take a bow to his majesty the Stelvio Pass. Your sense of achievement will be at an all time high!

When it comes to Giro d'Italia history the Stelvio Pass has been contested on 12 occasions. It first appeared in 1953 when during the penultimate stage the Italian legend Fausto Coppi attacked on the Stelvio Pass to take the lead and secure victory in Bormio. This guy Coppi was pretty good right! This would be his fifth and final Giro title and all thanks to the Stelvio.





Why Epic?

The north side of the Stelvio is the iconic, legendary climb from the Giro d'Italia.

7 of its 12 passings have been held during either Stage 20 or 21 highlighting its importance.

With the race held every May the norm is to watch the pro peloton climbing alongside walls of snow elevating it to a level of epic which is unparalleled to the other Grand Tours!

Meals

Breakfast & Dinner

Destinations

Prato dello Stelvio

Today's Ride

60km / 2000m elevation gain or

Accommodation

Bormio (Lombardy, Italy)



DAY SEVEN – Monday 15 July 2024 – Passo di Gavia

After your cycling heroics on the Stelvio Pass for some it is difficult to get going the next day. But you can rest assured after a good warm-up you will be glad you have signed up for yet another authentic challenge. Like the Stelvio Pass, Passo di Gavia (2621m) also rises out of the Bormio sport village. This is just another mythical climb that has crowned many modern-day Giro d'Italia winners! 'Gavia' with its 1400 metres elevation gain over 25km leaves one short of breath (5.5% average grade). From Bormio the climb begins as a major road accessing ski villages which then changes in a blink of an eye to a narrow remote mountain road which passes eerily through forest and later up into a barren glacier field. The 'real' Gavia road begins at Km12.5 with the first right hand switchback out of Santa Caterina ski village. We guarantee that you'll never forget its tight switchbacks and steep ramps!

1. Km 0 – 6: Gradient: 2.5%
2. Km 6 – 12.5: Gradient: 6.0%
3. **Km 12.5 – 23: Gradient: 7.4%**
4. Km 23 – 25.6: Gradient: 3.5%

The Gavia summit is a remarkable location but to get there you have to deal with its forever changing gradients. Near the summit you find the beautiful Lago Bianco with the Corno dei Tre Signori mountain (3359m) keeping guard. And right at the top the glacier means the temperature at this elevation are always quite low even in the middle of the summer. Jump into the family owned cafeteria (rifugio) for a nice hot chocolate or coffee!

Since 1960 there have been 10 Giro d'Italia crossings. Interestingly enough though the Gavia has also seen several race cancellations due to terrible weather conditions (1961, 1984 and 2013). Since the mid-1990s the Giro has scheduled 8 of its 10 Gavia crossings highlighting the desire of the modern race organisers to showcase this cycling giant as a true 'Cima Coppi' for the highest point in the race!

As we ride back into Bormio you can either have the guides drop you off at the hotel door or continue for an optional 10km climb up to the 2020 Giro Stage 18 summit finish on Laghi di Cancano. The first half of the climb scales the side of the valley before the final section converts into a series of curving switchbacks. At the 8km mark you pass the two medieval towers (Torri di Friale) and push on to the rifugio and the spectacular views over the lake.

Why Epic?

For some guests the Gavia climb has actually been a more difficult proposition than Stelvio Pass due to its UNPREDICTABILITY. Stelvio is an engineered modern road, almost a mountain highway. The Gavia though is a lesser trafficked road which is often closed for longer periods of the year.

The quality of the asphalt is poorer, its rougher, the road widens and narrows, the switchback corners viciously ramp up rather than flattening and the weather is usually more extreme.

Battling between how to ride the alternating flatter and steeper grades has also seen many riders push too hard before entering the final 13km on the 'real' mountain road! However, apart from all of its challenges we are always amazed to watch our cyclists time trial the final two kilometres around the lake to the summit on a false flat!

At this stage of the tour 3.5% ave. grade will now feel flat!!



Meals

Breakfast

Destinations

Laghi di Cancano

Today's Ride

75km / 1500m elevation gain or
125km / 2300m elevation gain

Accommodation

Bormio (Lombardy, Italy)

DAY EIGHT – Tuesday 16 July 2024 – Mortirolo & Como

It's not every day you get the chance to attempt an out and out wall like Mortirolo. This was a road which was always a secondary mountain route until it became asphalted in 1990. From that time on a new page in the Giro history books was opened. In those 30 years there have been as many as 14 Giro crossings and names such as Marco Pantani, Ivan Basso, Steven Kruiswijk and Luis Leon Sanchez have all lead the peloton over this 1851m elevation summit. It will be a great chance for everyone to test themselves on an authentic Giro d'Italia classic.

Once over Mortirolo there will be a 2hr transfer to Lake Como. Bellagio is considered to be the pearl of Lake Como.

Mortirolo - Why Epic?

With climb statistics that put Mortirolo in the same league as Zoncolan (Italy) or Angliru (Spain) it is one 'out and out' cycling challenge. 12.5km and 1300m elevation gain. We will leave you all to do the maths!

Meals

Breakfast

Destinations

Mortirolo & Lake Como

Today's Ride

70km / 1500m elevation gain

Accommodation

Bellagio (Lake Como, Italy)



DAY NINE – Wednesday 17 July 2024 – Ghisallo & Sormano

The grand finale concludes on the ‘Ghisallo’ and ‘Sormano’ climbs which are often used during the Giro di Lombardia professional race (5th cycling monument race alongside Milan-San Remo, Tour of Flanders, Paris Roubaix and Liege-Bastogne-Liege). It is a wonderful experience arriving at Piazzale del Ghisallo with the church dedicated to cyclists and the new cycling museum. We will finish descending to our hotel for the final celebration with spectacular Lake Como views!

Sormano - Why Epic?

Muro di Sormano will be an optional 2km detour for those who would like to push themselves over this short but painfully steep climb. The climb is 1.7km long but with an average gradient of 17% and ramps pressing 24% it's one of the toughest challenges around! The climb first featured in racing circles during three consecutive editions of the Giro di Lombardia during the early 1960's. Many riders though were forced to walk or pushed up by cycling fans and in 1963 it quickly disappeared from the pro scene. In 2006 'il Muro' returned to local racing and by 2012 the Giro di Lombardia was back writing 'Sormano' into cycling folklore!

Meals

Breakfast & Dinner

Destinations

Ghisallo

Today's Ride

70km / 1500m elevation gain

Accommodation

Bellagio (Lake Como, Italy)



DAY TEN – Thursday 18 July 2024 – Goodbyes

Following breakfast we can transfer you to Milan Malpensa Airport by 10:30am (1.5hr drive). If you would like to spend additional days relaxing and enjoying the Lake Como area please feel free to ask us for more information. We hope you have enjoyed your ‘Dolomiti’ cycling experience and we look forward to seeing you again in the near future!

Meals: Breakfast

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Tour Package:

Dolomites & Stelvio (9 – 18 July 2024)

Tour Inclusions:

9 nights accommodation (twin share), 3-4 star hotels
All breakfasts included, 3 picnic lunches & 5 dinners with beer & wine
9 epic guided rides (includes support van & mechanic)
Food and drink during rides
Commemorative cycling jersey
Comprehensive tour booklet (ride maps and profiles)

Price: 3975 Euro

EXTRAS

Single room supplement: 750 Euro
Carbon road bike hire (Orbea Avant M30, 105, compact, 11/32 cassette, rim brakes): 325 Euro
Carbon road bike hire (BMC Roadmachine, Di2, Ultegra, 11/32 cassette, disc brakes): 550 Euro

CONTACT

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