

GREAT BEAR 10 DAY LANDS END TO JOHN O'GROATS CYCLE

The 10 day price for 2020 is £1250 per person

Saturday the 5th – 16th September 2020

WHAT THE PRICE INCLUDES

- * Bike and bag transport to Lands end from Milton Keynes /Transport South for bikes and bags. (see transport below)
- * 11 Nights accommodation in single rooms in hotels/B&Bs
- * Breakfasts
- * Baggage transfers for the duration of the trip
- * Vehicular support for the entire cycle including back up vehicle carrying spares, mechanical support and use of spare bike should you need it
- * Overnight bike storage
- * Photos of your trip

WHAT THE PRICE EXCLUDES

- * Bike and helmet hire
- * Personal clothing and equipment
- * Insurance
- * Lunches and evening meals

DAILY

Day 1 - Collections from Milton Keynes and en route down to Cornwall

Day 2 - Land's End to Liskeard – 76 miles

Day 3 – Liskeard to Bridgwater – 100 miles

Day 4 – Bridgwater to Stourport – 110 miles

Day 5 – Stourport to Wigan -102 miles

Day 6 - Wigan to Carlisle - 110 miles

Day 7 - Carlisle to Ayr - 98 miles

Day 8 – Ayr to Crianlarich – 89 miles

Day 9 - Crianlarich to Fort William - 52 miles

Day 10 - Fort William to Tain - 95 miles

Day 11 – Tain to John O’Groats – 86 miles

*Daily mileages can sometimes vary due to road closures, route deviations etc

TRANSPORT OUT –

Due to the corona virus situation I hadn’t intended providing passenger transport from Milton Keynes down to Lands End due to social distancing but if everyone is more comfortable with it closer to the time I can put on passenger transport for an extra fee. If it is easier you may drop your bike and bag to me and I will drive them to Cornwall and meet you there.

HOME –

Accommodation after the ride will be in Thurso – again due to corona virus I didn’t intend to have you all crammed in a bus to be transported South but if everyone is comfortable with it I will provide passenger transport to Inverness for an extra fee. All bikes and luggage can be transported South with me or delivery if on route back to base.

WHAT HAPPENS DAY TO DAY?

This is your ride and we want you to make of it what you had in your head when you first googled ‘Lands end to John O’Groats cycle’. There are no set times to leave in the morning, you don’t have to ride in a group if you don’t want to, there are no set dinner times.

Usually on the ride people make great friends and all end up riding together, eating together and setting a time for next day’s riding and sometimes people do their own thing.

We have a Garmin for every 2 riders if you wish to use one. For those of you with your own Garmin’s I will send out the routes prior to the ride. If you want to go on a different route entirely then it is up to you providing that you turn up at the same accommodation as us! Please be advised that support in case of a severe breakdown off of the main route may be limited.

ACCOMMODATION

Due to Covid-19 this whole trip is being offered as single occupancy rooms – this means the overnight stops have changed slightly from the usual itinerary to make use of hotels that can accommodate our number of required single rooms. Expect Premier Inns and independent hotel/B&B's

BIKES AND EQUIPMENT

We strongly recommend that you ride a road or touring bike for the cycle and have put in sufficient training on this same bike. Whatever you choose make sure the bike has a suitable range of gears as you will be climbing steep hills in places and if you are not familiar with the mechanics of your bike it would pay to take it to a cycle shop for a service prior to the trip. If you intend on completing the ride on anything other than a road bike then please let me know prior to the ride as the vehicles are set up to carry road bikes.

One bike only please. If completing the ride on a touring bike please do not turn up for collection with panniers fitted as your bike won't fit in the vehicle, you may also end up leaving them in the van halfway through day one. Also please consider if you really need that bar bag on your road bike, I would guess that 90% of people who turn up with one end up leaving it in the van for the entire trip after day one. If you don't already own a pair prior to the ride you may want to get hold of some waterproof overshoes. These are often overlooked when planning the trip as most riders don't choose to go out in the rain but in completing the LEJOG it is inevitable that you will have to set out in the rain at some point.

Lights, you may think well 'I won't be riding at night', but in heavy rain, fog and under tree cover you need to give that vehicle approaching you from behind at 60mph every chance they can to see you. Some people turn up with lights that can barely be seen halfway down a lay-by and I would only recommend a high output LED pulsating rear light as there is a good chance you will have dense sea fog on the final push up to John O'Groats. Knog, Moon, Lezyne and Exposure all make good powerful rear lights.

Same goes for clothing, that all black Castelli gear looks great but when you have a logging truck bearing down on you in the rain in Scotland you want to make sure he knows you are there.

Gloves - you can never have too many pairs.

Water bottles – If you have 1 x 500ml bottle then you may want to invest in a couple of nice big bottles.

Helmets – I used to give you the option but from 2014 it is mandatory to be wearing a helmet while on one of our rides.

It is recommended that you bring a range of spares for your bike (chain links, spokes, inner tubes) I have a certain amount for sale on board the support vehicle, please understand however that it is not possible to stock for every single bicycle. I have tyres, tubes, bar tape, cleats, brake pads, gear and brake cables, chains, chamois cream and more. You are responsible for your own routine

maintenance throughout the trip but I will help out in any way that I can. I have track pumps and you do not need to bring your own.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Your baggage allowance for this trip is just the one piece of main luggage in the form of a sports/expedition bag or suitcase (not 4 small bags). If you have anything with wheels this will be preferred. Please also bring a small rucksack for you to keep all of your items in that you may need during the day (sun cream, tablets, chamois cream etc) I can only accommodate a small number of bike bags and these spaces will be reserved for people flying in to complete the ride so please enquire if you intend to bring one.

Wheel bag space is also limited, we already have spare wheels on the support vehicle and it won't be necessary for you to bring your own.

PREPARATION

There is no sugar coating it, the Lands End to John O'Groats cycle ride is tough, you can however make it easier on yourself by preparing for the trip as much as possible. It is generally noted that preparing physically for the ride is only 50% of the battle; the other 50% is managing those sores, pains, getting into a routine and summoning the drive to get back on that saddle each morning no matter what your situation. You ideally need to make time to get in 3 good rides consecutively in training and set off one day in the rain and replicate the sort of mileage you will be doing on your chosen ride to see what gear you need to buy to make yourself more comfortable.

Avoid doing all of your training on a turbo trainer or you may as well book your train home from Bristol now. If you plan to be stopping off taking pictures and frequenting pubs and tea rooms (why wouldn't you be?!) you may want to consider not riding SPD-SL pedals as they are rubbish for walking in and are the cause of quite a few injuries every year.

Treat yourself to some new gear cables, or while the bike is in for a service ask your bike shop to do this, after punctures a snapped gear cable is the most common breakdown on these trips, they can be brought for as little as £2 each and replacing them pre ride can save you a whole world of hassle!

Bottom brackets – a good day in the wet will bring out all of the gremlins so pop a new one in now instead of scratting around trying to find one in Scotland.

SUPPORT

The support vehicle will always be on hand should you need assistance at any time during the trip. In the van is a full tool kit, spare wheels and spare bikes. I will always be close to the riding group and will get ahead of you now and again for you to fill up water bottles and have a sit down. Whether

you need a break, have bike trouble or just need emotional support getting up a big hill, I will do what I can to keep you going.

FOOD

Breakfast is provided by your accommodation and ranges from the usual full English/Scottish through to cereals, yoghurts, fruit, toast and fruit juices, tea and coffee.

Lunches – for this trip it may be advised to carry a certain amount of food on the van to tide you over through the day, as we can't rely on the usual haunts being open or not having queues. I will be available to go shopping or collect food in the mornings then have them available on the van.

Evening meals are available at most accommodations or we are close to pubs/towns with selections of eating places – again situations may vary and exact dining options may not be apparent until we arrive at our destination each day but we will get you fed. If you have any dietary requirements i.e. vegan, vegetarian etc please let us know so we can advise accommodations in advance.

LAUNDRY

Due to the fact that we are constantly moving on during the cycle trips it is not practical to be using commercial washing services and it is recommended that you bring enough cycle clothing to rotate and wash in your accommodation by bringing some detergent with you. Due to the material that most bibs are made from people find they are normally dry by the next morning's ride anyway. If not you are welcome to hang gear up to dry in the vehicle.

GUIDES

I do not use guides on the Lands End to John O'Groats trips for a couple of simple reasons: * No guide enables us to keep the costs as low as possible and pass that on to you as a customer. * Mainly though we feel that for the majority of you, as riders, this is a massive personal challenge, which with the odd exception will only be completed once ever in your lifetime and to add a guide would somewhat take away from the personal achievement of riding the length of mainland Britain! We are not providing you with a 'tour' we are providing you with support for your expedition! You will be provided with relevant information on a suggested route by way of Garmin GPS with the route planned into it. Feel free to undertake whichever route you wish, I am just there to help out in any way I can!

Any further queries or questions please contact me on – Carl – 07860 563810

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or through the website at www.great-bear-tours.co.uk