

# GREAT BEAR – Coast and castles

The 8 day price is £785 per person - 24th – 31st May 2025

£890 for accommodation pre and post ride (twin)

## WHAT THE PRICE INCLUDES

- \* 7 nights' accommodation in twin/dorm rooms in hotels/hostel/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

## WHAT THE PRICE EXCLUDES

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

## DAILY

**23rd** – Arrive in Carlisle

**24th** – Carlisle to Newcastle – 68 miles approx

**25th** – Newcastle to Berwick– 76 miles approx

**26th** – Berwick to Edinburgh – 81 miles approx

**27th** – Edinburgh to Irvine – 65 miles approx

**28th** – Arran day

**29th** – Irvine to Portpatrick – 76 miles approx

**30th** - Portpatrick to Dalbeattie – 80 miles approx

**31st** - Dalbeattie to Carlisle – 60 miles approx

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

## **TRANSPORT**

Meet up is in Carlisle on the afternoon of the 23<sup>rd</sup> May or if you are reasonably local and want to save yourself the accommodation before and after the ride you can meet us at the hotel on the morning of the 24th – I will be in touch with where you are heading before the trip, I am collecting bikes on my way North and will drop off again after the ride on my way South.

## **WHAT HAPPENS DAY TO DAY?**

I have Garmin edge cycle computers for navigation which have the daily routes planned into them. 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**

The accommodation provided on the trip is a variety of independent/chain hotels, hostels and B&B's They vary due to nature of our locations each night and are based on 2 people sharing a twin room except hostels which may be a dorm room with up to 6 beds (only with members of our group though) Most accommodation has food and a bar available on site or nearby as well as Wi-Fi.

## **BIKES AND EQUIPMENT**

We strongly recommend that you ride a road bike if staying on tarmac or a gravel bike if you propose to indulge in the unsealed sections 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.

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 ride 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 at certain points on the coast road.. 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.

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 ensure your bag is functioning!! Weird yes but the amount of bags I get with broken handles, missing wheels and tears in are astounding.

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 now have small lockers in the van so a 20 litre rucksack should fit fine.

**NO BAGS FOR LIFE** – No one wants your stuff rolling around in the back of the van. If it doesn't zip up don't bring it please.

## **PREPARATION**

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 (except the off road sections) 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 Scottish through to cereals, yoghurts, fruit, toast and fruit juices, tea and coffee.

Lunches – from 2015 onwards I regret that I will no longer be able to offer lunches as I used to due to unpredictable weather, unpredictable locations and unpredictable breakdowns. Feel free to leave any food you require in the van .

Evening meals and drinks are not included in the price. Evening meals are available at most accommodations or we are close to pubs/towns with selections of eating places. 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 but if not I can now dry clothes in the van during the day.

Any further queries or questions please contact me on – Carl – 07869 714319

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