



Lake to Lake 2018

Italy

FAQ and Preparation Information

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If you have any questions which aren't covered by this FAQ please do not hesitate to contact us.

Where and when does this trip start and finish?

The **Lake to Lake** starts and finishes in our accommodation near Bergamo - Orio al Serio International Airport (BGY) and runs Saturday to Saturday.

You need to arrive at our accommodation on Saturday and depart the following Saturday. We stay near BGY on Saturday and the following Friday evenings. We ride from Sunday morning until Friday afternoon. We'll contact you with the address of our accommodation in Bergamo.

What's included in the Price?

- 7 Nights of Chalet or Hotel Accommodation in shared rooms (Sat-Sun)
- 7 High Quality Evening Meals (Sat-Sun)
- 7 Buffet Breakfasts (Sun-Sat)
- 6 Packed Lunches + Unlimited Trail Snacks (Sun-Fri)
- 6 Days of Guided Riding (Sun-Fri)
- All necessary lift passes and transport tickets
- Van Support - Your kit bag is moved each day and necessary uplifts/transport

What's not included in the Price?

- Transport to and from our start point: Near BGY Airport, Italy
- Alcoholic and Soft Drinks in the Evenings

What is the maximum group size?

Our groups are a maximum of 7 riders. This is the largest group booking we can accept and the maximum number of riders on a trip.

Can I book as an individual?

Yes, and many of our customers do just that. By the end of the week you'll be sure to have a bunch of new riding buddies.

What's the Route?

Please look on our website for a day by day route plan. The route may change slightly due to weather, forestry, road-closures etc. However, the accommodation is in the following locations:

- Near BGY, Italy
- Riva del Garda, Italy
- Lake Idro, Italy
- Cevo, Italy

- Sondrio, Italy
- Chiavenna, Italy
- Near BGY, Italy

Getting Here

Can I arrive a day or two early and/or leave a day or two late?

We cannot accommodate you before and after the trip, however, please contact us for information about alternative accommodation options in the area.

What time should I aim to be in BGY on the arrival date?

The earliest you can get access to your room at our accommodation in Bergamo is 2pm on Saturday. We suggest you aim to arrive at our accommodation before around 5pm if at all possible - so if flying please try and aim for a flight that arrives into BGY before around 4pm. This simply gives you time to build your bike and relax before we meet at 7.30pm for our evening meal followed by an introductory chat. We will send you specific arrival instructions before your trip.

Which airport should I fly into?

Bergamo - Orio al Serio International Airport (BGY) is very near our accommodation in the city; this is the best airport to fly to. You can also fly into Milan Malpensa Airport (MXP), Milan Linate Airport (LIN), Valerio Catullo Airport (VRN) or a number of other airports in the area, and arrange transport to our start location.

How can I get from BGY Airport to the nearby accommodation in Bergamo?

There is a regular Airport bus service from Bergamo Airport into the town and our hotel is within a 2 min walk of where the bus stops. Therefore even with your bike bag this will be the best option to get to the hotel. However, you can always get a taxi or an Uber from the airport to the hotel's front door. We'll be in touch with specific arrival information in the run up to your trip.

What is check-out time on the departure date?

Check-out from our final nights' accommodation in Bergamo is 10am on Saturday morning. If you are flying, we would recommend booking a flight that leaves in the early afternoon, this gives you plenty of time in the morning to get to the airport.

Driving Directions:

You can drive to Bergamo; we'll provide our accommodation address by email. Please aim to arrive at our accommodation after 14:00 and before around 17:00.

Parking:

There is free parking at our accommodation. You are free to leave your car here for the week; we cannot take responsibility for the security of your vehicle - but any problems are rare. You can store valuables in our accommodation.

Can I get to Bergamo any other way?

Yes, there is a train station in Bergamo. The website rome2rio.com is a great way of finding our travel options.

Can I leave my bike bag in Bergamo?

Yes, our accommodation in Bergamo has storage space to leave your bike bags/boxes for the week.

Admin:

What insurance do I need? READ THIS!

You **must** have insurance that will cover you for rescue in a mountainous and backcountry environment in the following countries: Italy. Your insurance must also cover you for any medical costs incurred in these countries, as well as repatriation. If you have an EHIC (formerly E111) card (EU citizens), this is an easy way of proving you are entitled to reciprocal medical care, however, it does not replace insurance and certainly won't cover any rescue operation. *It is a condition of booking that you take out insurance that meets the above criteria.*

We highly recommend to everyone has cover for extra costs and charges incurred as a result of delays, cancellations, rescheduling, repatriation or any other factors outside our control.

WorldNomads.com offer policies specifically designed for adventure tours such as ours.

Should I insure my bike and/or belongings?

We make every effort to ensure the security of your belongings and your bike. However, we don't under any circumstances accept reasonability for damage, loss or theft. It is up to you to ensure that you are happy with the security arrangements in place at accommodation and whilst transporting belongings, including your bike, on vehicles and other uplifts. We accept no liability for damage incurred to your bike during uplifts, either by vehicle or other mechanical means. *Please ensure that your belongings and bike are adequately insured during the trip for damage, theft and loss.*

Can I cancel or transfer my space to another week?

Due to the high costs we incur to pre-book accommodation, guiding and transportation, your final payment becomes non-refundable 8 weeks before departure. We highly recommend that you have adequate trip cancellation insurance in place to financially cover non-attendance due to uncontrollable circumstances. Please see our Terms and Conditions of Booking for more information.

What happens if I injure myself during the week?

Your insurance policy should cover this eventuality financially. You must be insured for transport to the nearest hospital for treatment. We will help you where we can with logistics in the event of a hospital visit, however, ultimately, our trip will continue without you and you may need to rely on your insurance cover to provide onward transport to either catch up with the trip or for repatriation.

How much spending money should I bring and what currency should this be in?

Euros are used in Italy. You'll just need some money for beer/coffee/soft drinks both en-route and during the evenings. What you bring usually depends on your attitude to wine and beers! We'd suggest that €200 would be more than enough for the week.

When should I tell you about a medical condition?

In the event that you are referred to hospital by our staff we may need to pass on medical information on your behalf. It is therefore extremely important that we are aware of any medical conditions. The booking form you will complete requests this information, however, please ensure that our staff are aware of any medical conditions on the first day of the trip.

The Riding

How long are the days and how much ascending and descending is there?

We'll usually ride from around 9am to around 5pm with a lunch break. During this time we'll often cover upwards of 50km. There is around 800 metres of climbing each day, with much less on some days and slightly more on other days. We'll often descend in excess of 4000 metres during a day. Over the entire week we cover in the saddle, around 275km with 5000m of climbing and 23000m of descending.

How difficult is the riding?

This is an "invite only" trip and you must have ridden with us before. You should be an expert rider, very experienced in riding natural technical terrain in mountainous areas.

How fit do I need to be?

An excellent level of endurance fitness is required. You must be prepared to climb for around 700-1200metres per day. You must be prepared for long days in the mountains, sometimes with few escape options.

What kind of trails do you ride?

We ride natural trails that have formed over hundreds of years. They are all footpaths and are legal to ride on. It just so happens that these trails are the perfect gradient for mountain biking.

Do you use lifts or uplifts?

Yes, our concept relies on the use of van uplifts to help us with the ascending each day!

What will the weather be like?

Generally in the late summer months (September/October) in the Italian Lake District the days are hot and sunny with high pressure systems centred over the area for most of the summer. We occasionally get afternoon storms, which while severe are fairly short lived. There is a high temperature range, temperatures can reach 40°C in the valleys during the day, while during a storm it can snow and the temperatures can approach freezing! We can also sometimes experience several days of bad weather due to frontal weather systems, however, these systems are uncommon. It is essential to have appropriate clothing for a range of temperatures and weather conditions. Please read on for advice on the riding kit you should bring on the trip.

Is there a day off? Can I have one?

There is no day off. You are welcome to stay with our van if you wish not to ride on any day.

Kit

What bike do I need?

You need a specific type of bike to complete (and enjoy) this trip. Ideally, we would suggest a modern all-mountain (or enduro) bike with around 5"-6" of front and rear suspension. A downhill bike will be too heavy for the climbs and long days, whereas a lightweight cross country bike will be too light for the descents. There are plenty of appropriate options, for example, our guides will all be riding Yeti SB6c's, Yeti SB5.5c's and SB5c's – all great bikes for the trip.

Is a hardtail okay?

We would suggest that a full suspension set-up will be a more comfortable choice for the trip.

Can I bring a fat bike?

No.

Can I bring a plus sized bike?

Yes and our bike trailers can accommodate.

What tyres should I run?

We personally prefer a tubeless set-up, using Maxxis High Roller or Maxxis Minion tyres. The EXO versions of Maxxis tyres have proved to be a great combination between weight, puncture resistance and durability. If you suffer from a lot of punctures or are a heavier rider consider double down Maxxis options. We always carry at least two tubes with us as tubeless repairs on the move can be time consuming or impossible. You can also run a traditional tubes set-up with any of these tyres. Go for a tyre width between 2.3-2.6". Avoid any skinny cross country tyres and super lightweight tubes, you will not have the comfort, control or puncture resistance that you'll need for this trip. Regardless of your tyre set-up please carry some form of sidewall patch.

What gear set-up shall I use?

We really like the modern 1x set-up and it works great as its very simple and requires little maintenance. However, please avoid a huge front ring – a 34t, 32t or 30t all work well. With modern clutch rear derailleurs, front ring chain retention is not required. You could also use a 2x set-up, or even an older Shimano or SRAM set-up.

Can I use my *insert exotic bike component here*?

We don't really care as long as your set-up is proven and you know how to maintain it.

SPD's or Flats?

This is a personal choice. Some of our guides clip in, others use flats. Our only comment on the subject is to kindly request that you do not arrive with SPD's unless you are 100% comfortable with them in all riding situations. This trip is not the time to learn how to ride with SPD's. If you really are unsure please contact us and we can offer further advice.

Can I hire a bike?

No, you need to bring your own bike.

What tools/workshop spares should I bring alone?

We'll provide a bike stand, track pump and a tool-box (with basic workshop tools - we're talking the standard tools you would need to build a bike) that will be set-up for use each evening. You should bring any tools that are unique to common servicing of your bike. We'll also provide DOT and Mineral Brake Fluid along with a bleed kit for Avid and Shimano Brakes.

What spare parts for my bike should I bring?

We do try and carry some essential spares in our van to get you back on the trail again. However, we can't carry specific spares and therefore **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT** that at the very least you bring, a few sets of replacement brake pads AND a couple of spare derailleur hangers. A spare rear derailleur is a good idea and perhaps a spare tyre in your baggage. We would also recommend any specific suspension linkage bolts that commonly fail on your bike. It might take a bit of effort and pre-planning to source some of these spares but this will be worth it if it keeps you on the trail.

What happens if my bike breaks beyond repair?

This is unlucky, but does happen from time to time. We'll do our best to get you up and running by getting hold of a hire bike for you. Unfortunately, we can't be held responsible for any riding you miss as a result of this event.

What riding kit should I bring? (PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY)

You're riding for 6 days and you're unlikely to have the opportunity to do any laundry. Therefore, please bring enough riding kit for this duration of trip. In good weather, you'll probably only end up using some of it, but in bad weather you'll be thankful of the extra items instead of having to put wet and dirty kit back on in the morning! You'll need riding shorts (we'd say at least 3) and several short sleeved riding tops. Generally long riding pants will be too hot, however, waterproof over-trousers or waterproof shorts can be brought along if you wish (we don't bother). Padded chamois undershorts work well. You'll want a pair of chamois undershorts for each day. A good waterproof jacket is essential. It is necessary to bring something to provide some warmth as well – we usually carry a windstopper jersey.

A helmet is required, please bring a half lid though, a full face will be too hot! Helmets with detachable chin-guards are a good option if you prefer extra protection on the descents. Knee guards are highly recommended and some riders like to use elbow guards too. Riding glasses are essential and you'll want the option to have both clear and dark options – or alternatively photochromic lens work well. Full finger gloves are recommended, get some lighter ones though, knuckle protection is all very well, but will be hot and uncomfortable. You'll need a 15-20litre pack with the ability to carry at least 2 litres of water. In this pack should be a selection of spares including at least two inner tubes, good tyre levers, a pump, a puncture repair kit, a tyre sidewall repair kit (old cut up toothpaste tubes and duct tape work well), one complete set of brake pads, a spare derailleur hanger and some common bolts found on your bike. You'll want a selection of trail tools for running adjustments and repairs. We would also suggest including a couple of energy gels.

One of the most important items to bring with you is a mobile phone – reception is surprisingly good in the European Alps and there situations when a phone call can make life easier. Please ensure before you depart that your phone will work in Europe. You can keep it turned off if you like, however, please pack it in your riding kit each day.

You should pack a camera!!

Can you list that kit for me?

- Riding Shorts (at least 3)
- Riding Tops (short sleeved, or at least long sleeved that can be rolled up)
- Chamois Liners (6)
- Good Waterproof Jacket (Goretex or similar)
- Windstopper or Warm Layer
- Waterproof over-trousers/waterproof shorts (we wouldn't bother, but no harm in bring them in case of foul weather)
- A half lid Helmet (full face with detachable chin guard also an option)
- Knee Guards (highly recommended)
- Elbow Guards (optional)
- Riding Glasses (with clear and dark lenses, or a photochromic lens)
- Full Finger Riding Gloves (we suggest a couple of pairs)
- 15-20litre Riding Pack with a 2/3litre water bladder
- Usual trail spares as discussed above
- Basic trail tools
- Energy Gels
- Mobile Phone
- Camera

What off-bike kit should I bring?

A kit bag, somewhere between 50-100litres should work. Please keep in mind we have limited capacity for kit in our van so keep it to one kit bag per person please. **Please ensure all your spare parts fit in this bag – loose boxes of spares in the van are just asking to get lost.** You'll need clothes for the evenings and some basic items to keep yourself smelling fresh! Any questions, fire us an e-mail.

Should I bring any body armour?

As above, we suggest everyone uses knee guards and our guides will usually be wearing them for the descents. Some riders feel more comfortable with elbow guards – our guides generally don't use them – however, if you are happy to carry/wear them on the climbs then bring them by all means. We don't suggest a pressure suit or a spine guard, it will be too hot.

Accommodation and Food

What accommodation will we be staying in?

We use a series of comfortable hotels along the route. These are 2*/3*, and we have made sure all the hotels we use are friendly and comfortable. All have hot showers, comfortable beds and somewhere to relax in the evenings. You will always be in either a single or double bed. You will be sharing either a twin or triple room, although we can offer single rooms for a small supplement subject to availability.

Is there WiFi?

Yes, although we kindly request that you do not use your phone/tablet at the dinner table. Some of the hotels have poor or intermittent WiFi due to their location in the mountains.

What is the food like?

Each hotel will provide an evening meal and breakfast. The evening meal is a fixed menu affair. This is always a 3/4 course meal. The evening meal does not include wine or any drinks, however, soft and alcoholic drinks can be purchased from the hotel bar. Breakfast is continental style. We provide packed lunch each day. This will consist of a large sandwich, crisps, a chocolate bar as well as unlimited trail mix (dried fruit, sweets) and a selection of fruit.

What happens if I don't like a meal?

If you have any dislikes please specify this on your booking form and we can inform the hotels in advance. The hotel restaurants sometimes offer you a choice of a couple of dishes. They should be able to accommodate minor changes to their menu and will often offer to replace a fixed menu dish with another dish if you don't like the set menu option.

Can you cater to specific dietary requirements?

Usually this is no problem. Please check with us if you have any specific requirements before you book. If you have not entered a specific requirement on your booking form, often the hotel will be unable to cater for this on the evening.

Will there be enough food?

Yes, we have made sure that the hotels we are using will provide "mountain biker" portions and our guests are usually more than happy with the quantity of food. But it is a set meal and the food will not be unlimited. If you have specific calorific requirements, you may feel as though bringing some extra food is appropriate, for example some guests like to bring along powdered carbohydrate shakes or recovery drinks.

Can I have a room to myself?

Maybe - please contact us if you would like to check if this is possible. It totally depends on the availability of our accommodation providers. There will be a single room supplement of £30 per night.

Do you provide towels?

Yes, there is no need to bring your own towel, each hotel will provide one.

Can I wash my kit at any point during the trip?

We strongly advise you to have enough riding kit for the entire duration of your trip.