

Giro d'Italia 2009

... Armstrong; Lake Como; Italian Alps; Cinque Terre & Italian Riviera

Giro d'Italia

This multistage cycling race is Italy's biggest annual sporting event. Appropriately referred to as the 'feast of May' by locals, it is recognised after Le Tour de France as the world's second most important cycling Grand Tour. For spectator passion and spectacular scenery it is arguably number 1, but please don't say that to a Frenchman!!

The Rides

The trip will feature guided rides in Italy's best riding destinations. Specifically we experience the back-roads and hills of the central lakes district (Lake Como), the awe-inspiring Italian Alps, and visually dramatic Cinque Terre region. As with the Giro you will encounter the diversity of terrain and environments that make Italy such a desirable destination to ride. Importantly riders will be supported and flexibility given for those participants that want to ride a little more or a little less.

Operated by

italian immersions



May 14-23rd, 2009 - Celebrating 100 years

Experience cycling history as Italy celebrates 100 years of the land's most famous annual sporting event – Giro d'Italia. This 10 day itinerary captures the best of Italian cycling. Beginning on the postcard shores of Lake Como, we follow the event as it moves high into the Italian Alps, and then down to the Mediterranean waters and coastal splendour of the Italian Riviera.

Along the way we discover more than a great cycling event, but places steeped in history and nature; traditional towns and villages; stunning mountain geography; fine Italian food and wine; and of course great riding and fun.

Itinerary

Day 1: Thursday 14th May Cernobbio, Lake Como

Arrive independently at Cernobbio accommodation. Upon arrival at hotel you will meet the trip host who will assist you with any initial travel needs. Lake Como is arguably Italy's most beautiful lake and for many a visitor the country's best location.

On our initial night we are treated to a welcome dinner
Meals: D

Day 2: Friday 15th May Tour of the 3 Lakes Ride: 110km or 55km

Following breakfast we experience our first trip ride, a wonderful flat roll taking in the enchanting surrounds of

Lake Como, Lake Lugano, and Lake Maggiore. Wedged between the lower ranges of the Alps the central lakes area is truly one of Italy's best riding destinations, so much so that for some time it was Lance Armstrong's Italian riding base.

Meals: B; D

Day 3: Saturday 16th May Giro stage 7 and Ancient Villa Ride: 60km

Today's highlight is the arrival of the Giro as it moves into the area of Como. We commence our day with a relaxed morning ride along the lakes western shore, passing numerous ancient villa's that characterise and define the landscape. The rest of the day is dedicated to capturing the best of the Giro action and atmosphere.

Meals: B

Package Cost

\$5,500.00 per person – twin share
\$955.00 Single supplement

Trip Inclusions

- 3 night's 3-star hotel
- 6 night's 4-star hotel
- Support Vehicle (Piedmonte & Riviera)
- Experienced cycle guide
- 10 Breakfasts
- 1 lunch with wine
- 6 dinners with wine

Not Included

- International airfares
- Bike rental \$400
- Travel Insurance
- Items of personal nature

Group Size

Maximum 20

Tour Date

May 14-23rd, 2009

TRIP COORDINATOR

Darren Welch: Co-founder of Italian Immersions. Aside from embracing Italian culture Darren has a background in Sports Science. Prior to Italian Immersions he worked with high performance sports teams both in Australia and abroad. A passionate cyclist; Darren's role will be to co-ordinate the itinerary and provide service and support.

Contact Darren Welch at The Adventure Travel Company for more information.

darren@adventure-travel.com.au



Day 4: Sunday 17th May

Madonna del Ghisallo Ride: 75km

Today we participate in a classic climb that takes us to the fabled Madonna del Ghisallo church. Significantly the Church is part cycling museum, and its famous hill has been ridden at the Giro d'Italia and Giro di Lombardia. Following lunch we depart Como for Piedmont, our destination for the next 3 nights. We stay in a Castle dating back to the 15th century, which has now come back to life as a 4 star hotel with restaurant and beauty centre (massage for tired cycling legs!!).

Meals: B; D

Day 5: Monday 18th May

Classic Italian Alps Ride: 60km*

There is a scheduled rest day in the Giro today, giving us the opportunity for a full day of riding in the dramatic Alps that border Italy and France. We follow the valley roads of Cuneo that led to the high passes of Italy's legendary Alps. This is challenging terrain, instantly recognisable from the many images of great champions of the past and present struggling against the resistance of nature. Following this we will have the opportunity to immerse in a session of water therapy at our hotel.

Meals: B; D

Day 6: Tuesday 19th May

Giro stage 9 Cuneo → Sestriere (Mountains Stage)

Today is dedicated to witnessing the best of Giro Stage 9 as the race moves from our base of Cuneo into the nearby Alps. With our previous day's riding experience fresh in our memory (and legs not quite as fresh!!), we can only watch with awe as the pro's step up to one of the race's most demanding and much anticipated stages. No scheduled riding today to assist recovery after yesterday's Alp riding excursion.

Meals: B; D

Day 7: Wednesday 20th May

Barolo Wine Country Ride: 55km

No journey into Piedmont can be complete without a side-trip into the wine country of the Barolo – Italy's best northern red wine and for many Italy's 'King of Wines'.

Following our ride we enjoy lunch in a Barolo wine estate before transferring to the Italian Riviera.

Meals: B; L

Day 8: Thursday 21st May

Giro Stage 11 (Time-Trial Stage) and Montemarcello-Magra Ride: 45km

Today Giro Stage 11 comes to the Italian Riviera with an exciting TT finishing on the ancient Cinque Terre fishing village of Riomaggiore. Situated in some of Italy's most extraordinary countryside it promises to be a highlight stage of the centenary year event.

In the morning we ride a scenic loop of Montemarcello-Magra Nature Park, a protected area of rare beauty and popular local cycling location. The ride moves high over the sea offering outstanding views to the enchantment and charm of the 'Gulf of Poets'.

Meals: B;

Day 9: Friday 22nd May

Giro Stage 12 and Cinque Terre Ride: 80km or 40km

We view the stage departure into Tuscany, The day also includes our participation in one of Italy's best coastal rides; the World Heritage listed Cinque Terre. The steep, undulating terraced terrain – with the Apennines in places standing right next to the sea – make for extraordinary riding and experience.

On our final evening we come together with a dinner a local specialities and regional wines.

Meals: B; D

Day 10: Saturday 23rd May

Departure/ End of Trip

Following breakfast a departure transfer to nearby La Spezia station – providing direct line to either Milan or Rome.

Meals: B

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