

San Francisco to LA Bike

Cycle 600km along USA's Golden State



Ultimate Challenges

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San Francisco to Los Angeles Bike

Conquer 600km along the nation's most famous coast

This is an amazing cycle challenge linking California's most iconic cities San Francisco and Los Angeles. Highway 1 is famous for running along some of the most beautiful coastlines in the USA, leading to its designation as an All-American Road. Our challenging route traverses the movie-magic producing coast of the world, but these Californian kilometres open up to nothing less than the ideal setting for a classic adventure story. From the seats of our bicycles, we immerse ourselves in an exhilarating cycling experience, this twisting, cliff-hugging, 600 plus - kilometre route along the nation's most famous coast will take 6 days of riding to complete.

Take a smile-inducing breath of fresh air first thing in the morning, sipping your coffee, your eyes falling on the storybook landscape that's to be the backdrop of our journey. Stretch your legs. The climate and topography are perfect for fantastic biking routes that fill the pages of our days with epic climbs and journeys through numerous attractions along the coast. The views and laid back California culture along this challenge will soothe the healthy aches and exhaustion; get ready for an awesome ride. Come and cycle with us to the Land of Angels.



Detailed itinerary

Day 1: Depart London to San Francisco

Upon arrival we will be met by our guides and transferred to our overnight hotel in San Francisco. Tonight we hear more about the challenge ahead.

Day 2: San Francisco to Costanoa

62 miles/99kms

Today we bid farewell to San Francisco and begin our odyssey to the City of Angels. In just a few short miles, we'll be travelling on Highway 1, the iconic route that stretches the length of the American Pacific coastline. Right away, we're separated from the urban sprawl by the coastal mountains' rolling foothills. Glimpse the fringes of great Redwood forests in the distance as the highway rolls and winds through laid back beach towns and solitary countryside. After a delicious lunch by the crashing surf, pedal onwards through low, grassy hills and local vegetable farms. We'll start working up a healthy dinner appetite as we pass plots of artichokes, beans, and pumpkins, many of which terminate directly across the highway from the beach. Tonight, we set up our first camp together at a homey, forested campground just a few minutes inland. Trails meander from our site down to the beach for evening stargazing.

Day 3: Costanoa to Monterey

64 miles/102kms

Wake up to the fresh salt breeze mingling with the delicious smell of morning coffee. After enjoying a hearty breakfast, we'll depart on the second leg of our journey. The morning takes us over wooded hills and curves in and out of the artichoke fields, though we're never too far from the sea.

Around lunchtime, navigate the beachside roads of Santa Cruz, whose lovely, sandy beaches and campy tourist boardwalk beg for photos. Our afternoon holds a low elevation profile as the landscape morphs into flat coastal plain, giving us a chance to stretch our legs and coast a bit. Tonight, set up camp only metres away from the rolling waves at our site at Fort Ord State Park on Monterey Bay.



Day 4: Monterey to Big Sur

52 miles/83kms

Today we leave Monterey via the waterfront and John Steinbeck's Cannery Row. We re-join Highway 1, and pass through the elegant resort community bordering the celebrated Pebble Beach, home to some of the world's most prestigious golf tournaments. Heading away from civilization we ride a tranquil section of ocean-side highway. The afternoon, however, brings us to a lush landscape of arboreal slopes as we approach the southern stronghold of the Redwood Forests. Thousands of years old and upwards of 100 meters tall, these massive conifers tower over every other organism. Today's ride leaves time to explore the trails among these colossal trees, making us feel as though we're entering the most prehistoric of old growth timber.



Detailed itinerary

Day 5: Big Sur to Cambria to Santa Ynez 71 miles/113kms

The hills of the Big Sur coast get even bigger for the first 50 miles of today's ride. We are either climbing or descending virtually the entire way along Highway 1 which is carved right out of cliffs that rise over 1000ft above the ocean. This is some of the most dramatic cycling of our challenge. South of Ragged Point the hills level out as we ride through idyllic ranch land past an elephant seal colony and Hearst Castle before to the quaint seaside village of Cambria. From here we transfer inland to Santa Ynez, (approx. 100miles) where we stay in a hotel for the night.



Day 6: Santa Ynez to Ventura 74 miles/118kms

Southern California's vineyard-laden grasslands take the place of the coastal mists we've become so accustomed to as we stretch our legs along the first few miles this morning. Traversing the arid, hilly region between Santa Ynez and the shoreline passes quickly, and the beaches welcome us back for the remainder of the ride.



Day 6: cont.

The warmer southern seas raise the air temperature just enough to give us visions of the palm trees and white sands we'll be strolling through soon. Pedal through the idyllic seaside city of Santa Barbara, pausing to take in the views - and a tasty lunch! From here, we continue along the curving coast road, the verdant mountains rising above on to the east. Our camp tonight borders the estuary of the Santa Clara River, an excellent area to bird-watch for eagles, herons, and egrets.



Detailed itinerary

Day 7: Ventura to Santa Monica, LA 56 miles/89kms

Wake up to balmy southern sunshine and get ready for the final chapter in our saga! We navigate the Ventura city borders until we emerge on a mountainous section of shoreline riddled with shady oak canyons and babbling brooks.

On our other side, the pounding waves reveal the occasional pod of dolphins as we travel towards even warmer seas. We pedal further into the star-studded town of Malibu – you may see your favourite celebrity sunning on one of the beaches! Almost as noteworthy are the stunning mansions perched along the hills as we travel through town.

We'll take advantage of the beautiful beaches (and interesting people-watching) for a last picnic on the surf line. Further on, Los Angeles grows tantalizingly closer on the horizon. Bends in the highway give ever closer views of the enormous Ferris wheel on Santa Monica pier, pinpointing the finale of our journey together.

Day 7: Cont.

Finally, the Santa Monica hills give way to quintessential palm-lined streets, leading us at last to our celebratory destination. A well-earned party at the Pier brings our expedition to a fabulous close on the streets of L. A. Tonight we celebrate our achievements with a special gala dinner and party the night away LA style!

Day 8: Los Angeles to London

Today is free for everyone to enjoy the sights and sounds of Los Angeles. Our vehicles will pick us up in the afternoon and take us to the airport for our overnight flight home.

Day 9: Arrive London, UK



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This itinerary is complex and subject to change

Challenge grade

Tough

Best time of year

September to October

