

Overseas cycle ride training plan

Before you start remember that your body may need **time to adjust** to your new fitness regime. We recommend you ideally start your training plan no less than **six months before you start** your challenge. Within your training programme, **rest is as important** as time spent cycling. We strongly recommend that you rest on at least one day out of seven. Equally, when training, stick within the limits of speed and distance that are **comfortable for you**.

MONTH 1	<p>Get into a routine of exercising regularly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the time to get your overall fitness levels up either walking, swimming or cycling Aerobic Train 3 days a week, 30-35 minutes per session 1 x 5 mile cycle rides (per week) 1 x 10 mile cycle ride in the month 	MONTH 2	<p>Building a strong foundation of fitness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3x 40 minute aerobic sessions every week 1 x strength training 2 x 5 mile cycle rides (per week) 1 x 10 mile cycle ride
MONTH 3	<p>Build your endurance and strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 x 45 minute aerobic sessions every week 2x strength training 2 x 7 mile cycle rides (per week), including hilly terrain 2 x 20 mile cycle ride 1 weekend of cycling in the month – 2 hours on the Saturday & Sunday 	MONTH 4	<p>You will be focusing on training both mental and physical aspects of yourself</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to cycle to and from work each day (5 hours in total) or workout for 4 hours a week 2x cross training, resistance training or spinning class evenings per week 2 x 15 mile cycle rides (per week) 1 x 25 mile cycle ride 2x strength training
MONTH 5	<p>Continue to build you mental and physical endurance and strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 weekend back to back cycling, 4-5 hours on Saturday/ 3 hours on Sunday Other weekends 1-2 hour cycling on each day Continue cycling to and from work each day (5 hours in total) or workout for 4 hours a week 1 x 35 mile cycle ride 	MONTH 6	<p>Maximise your training to give you that extra endurance and strength which you will need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 weekend back to back cycling 5-6 hours on Saturday AND Sunday Other weekends 1 x 4 hour cycle on one day Total 50 miles in one cycle ride 2x cross training, resistance training or spinning
Take it easy in the final week: 3 x 10 mile cycle rides			

Top tips for training

- If you have not cycled for some time **begin slowly**.
- Find stretches of **hilly terrain** in order to experience the difficulties of cycling uphill and changing gear.
- Ensure your itinerary includes **off-road** cycling.
- Please make sure that your **saddle is at the right height**. This means that when you are sitting, your toes barely touch the ground. If the seat is too low not only will your work rate increase considerably, but you will also tire much faster and potentially cause knee problems.
- Learn to **use your gears properly**. Change gear while the pedalling is still relatively easy as you go up hill.
- On your cycling training routines **do not forget to take water**, a small medical kit, repair kit and helmet with you at all times. Also pack food such as nuts, fruit and sandwiches.

If you have not **exercised** for a long time we recommend your **see your doctor before you start** your new training plan. Don't over do it and make sure you keep your plan varied and fun!

This is **just a guide** and may not suit your challenge exactly. Please also refer to the plan sent from your tour operator. If you have any queries please do contact us.

Diet and hydration

It is important that you eat and drink well to maintain a good cycling performance and health. Eating the wrong food, or drinking too little water, can leave you feeling tired, run down and deflated.

Your Diet

Take a look at your basic diet – everyday food has all the nutrients and energy you need for a good balanced diet.

- **Carbohydrates** are the best source of food for your muscles – eat plenty of pasta, beans, rice, wholegrains, fruit and vegetables.
- **Avoid alcohol** and **caffeine** – they make you dehydrated.
- **Nibble during long rides** – for rides of more than two hours you should try to eat a little as you go to replenish your muscle glycogen. Try bananas, cereal bars or dried fruit.
- **Refuel** after long rides – eat or drink carbohydrate-rich food during the hour (ideally in the first 20 minutes) following a long ride to experience the benefits.

A word of warning: Avoid training too soon after eating. Blood will be diverted to your muscles rather than being used for digestion, which is likely to lead to stomach upsets.

Keep Hydrated

Water is needed to produce sweat (which keeps you cool), and to make sure your body is working properly.

- Don't wait until you are thirsty or your mouth is dry.
- Carry the liquid that you plan to drink in a Camelbak or Platypus, not in your hand – uneven distribution of weight will affect your stride and comfort.
- If you like using energy drinks limit their consumption to 1 litre for every 2 litres of water.
- Drink little and often – small amounts of water every 15 minutes. You should drink at least 1 litre of water per hour while cycling.
- Eat foods containing sodium – this can help your body absorb the water it needs.

Fluid output is as important as the input. If you are drinking a great deal but not passing water regularly, you may find you are dehydrated. Watch out for signs of dehydration:

Dry or sticky mucus membranes in the mouth

Fatigue

Dizziness or confusion

Decreased urine output

Darkening in colour of urine

Heartburn or stomach ache

Lower back pain

Headache

Psychological irritation or depression

Water retention