

Etape du Tour 2012 ACT I & II by Ronan Pensec Travel

Friday July 6th to Sunday July 15th 2012

10 days and 9 nights – with transfers

in 3* hotels close to departure and finish locations

L'Etape du Tour, established in 1993 to allow amateur cyclists to test their legs on the route of one of the mountain stages in the Tour de France, has become the reference race for cyclo sportive riders from all over the world.

Over 50 different nationalities are represented in the field. Riders come from faraway countries, all of them burning with the same passion for the Tour de France and the legendary French mountains.

Since L'Etape du Tour is a travelling race, it is a unique yearly chance to discover new regions and new landscapes, to combine a sports challenge with tourism in France.

In view of the success of the last few editions, ASO has implemented a solution which allows them to satisfy as many cyclists as possible.

L'Etape du Tour has been played out in two acts since summer 2011.

With two challenges instead of one, participants can focus on the stage which matches their ability and preferences best. The most ambitious riders can also go for the prestigious double.

**Etape du Tour, Albertville – La Toussuire - Friday July 6th to Monday July 9th 2012
4 days and 3 nights in 3* hotels close to departure and arrival locations**

**VIP Tour near Mont Ventoux - Monday July 9th to Thursday July 12th
3 days and 3 nights in a 3* hotel**

**Etape du Tour, Pau – Bagnères de Luchon – Thursday July 12th to Sunday July 15th
3 days and 3 nights in 3* hotels close to departure and arrival locations**

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Agrément tourisme n°029030003

ACT I: Albertville - La Toussuire July 8th, 2012:

ALBERTVILLE / LA TOUSSUIRE-LES SYBELLES (140 km)



Col de la Madeleine: 6.2 %, 25.3 km, 2000 meters,

Col de la Croix de Fer : 6.9 %, 22.4 km, 2067 meters

Col du Mollard: 6.8%, 5.7km, 1638 meters

Col de La Toussuire: 6.1%, 18 km, 1705 meters

With this program, we offer you to spend 2 nights near the start in a 3* hotel and 1 night in La Toussuire in a 3* residence on a half-board basis (bed and breakfast with dinner - wine and water included).

You will be one of the privileged riders who will be provided with accommodation near both the start and the finish. Albertville is a small town of about 18.000 inhabitants and only 5 hotels: unfortunately not enough to lodge 8.000 riders.

For the first 2 nights, we booked a 3 star hotel in La Léchère (23 km, 14,3 miles from Albertville) where the start will be given and the village will be hosted.

After the race, you will be staying in a 4* residence in La Toussuire (with pool). This will spare you the hassle of a bus transfer back to your start hotel. By the time many participants get on their bus, you'll have already showered and will be celebrating your performance.

The highlights of this package:

- Our hotels are located:
 - At the start, our hotel is located in the town of La Léchère (23 km – 14.3 miles from Albertville).
 - At the finish, you will be one of the few privileged ones who will be able to ride from the finish line to your hotel. While the other competitors wait for their transfer back, you will be able to take it easy/cool down!
- If you wish, we will pick up, on Saturday afternoon, your bike to bring it to a secured location close to the starting line where it will be stored overnight. If you feel up to it, you can of course choose to ride the entire distance from the hotel to the starting line.

Friday, July 6th: Day 1

Group: Meeting at Geneva airport

Hotel: 3* Le Radiana in La Léchère

Bus transfer: *(see above)*:

Geneva airport – La Léchère: 111km, 69 miles (1 hour 47 min)

Our staff will welcome you at the airport and will stay with you throughout your entire stay with us.

We booked the hotel Le Radiana (<http://www.radiana.net/intro.html>) on half board basis (water and wine included). “This is a distinctive hotel with a very strong personality, inspired by the highly present art deco style from its origins. It combines the charm of an atmosphere inhabited by the splendour of days gone by and the comfort of today”.

After checking in, you will be free to make any final adjustment on your bike and become familiar and acclimated with the area. You may also have the time to start warming-up for the big day or relax at the hotel.



On the evening, you will have your first dinner with the group and enjoy local wines and traditional dishes.

Saturday, July 7th: Day 2

Group: Day off / Visit of the village

Hotel: 3* Le Radiana in La Léchère

You will start the day with a plentiful breakfast with menu options that will help fuel you up for this last preparation day.

After breakfast, our bus will bring you to the Etape du Tour village with its bicycle exhibition, where all the major European manufacturers will be present. This is also where you will sign for and pick up your race number. Although, the distance between your hotel and the village can easily be cycled, our bus will come to pick you up at your hotel to drop you off in Albertville. If you feel like riding from your hotel to the village, you are of course welcome to do so!

The afternoon will be off: you will have time to go for an easy ride.

For those who wish it, in order to ease the stress tomorrow morning, we have booked a secured storage facility close to Albertville (9km-5.6 miles from Albertville) where the bikes will be kept overnight.

Between 4pm and 5pm, our staff will come to your hotel to pick up your bike as well as bike case and bring it there. Tomorrow morning, you will collect your bike from this site and ride the last kilometres to the starting line.

On the last evening before the race, we have asked for a dinner especially prepared to give you all the energy that you will need for the upcoming challenge.

Sunday, July 8th: Day 3

Group: D-Day: Etape du Tour

Hotel: 4* residence in La Toussuire

Today is the day! This is your opportunity to live up to the same challenge as the professionals.

The race's start time is 7.00am but you will be required to be on the starting line by 6:30am.

After an early breakfast, if you chose this option, our bus will be waiting in front of your hotel to bring you to the start. You will be dropped off at the bike storage facility in order to get your bike. The 9 km to the starting line will serve as a good warm up for the race ahead of you.

If you feel up to riding the entire distance from the hotel to the start, you are of course free to do so. Here you'll take your place among the thousands of other competitors who came from all over the world to compete in this great cycling event.



There will be several feeding/drink stations set up during the race. However, due to the high number of participants, we highly recommend you bringing your own supply (water, gel, energy bars...).

The ideal location of your residence in La Toussuire will enable you to ride directly to the hotel after the race. One of our staff members will be at the finish line to show you the direction to your residence. At the residence, you will be able to relax, re-hydrate and share your impressions before gathering with your group to celebrate your glorious ride.

For your information, the participants booking a double or a twin room will be accommodated in private apartments, while those booking a single room will share bigger units offering 2 separate rooms and bathrooms.

The residence offers the following amenities: covered pool, sauna, hammam, Wi-Fi, laundry-room...

The dinner will be served in a close by restaurant.



Monday, July 9th: Day 4

Group: Day off / Transfer to Avignon

Hotel: 3* hotel near Mont Ventoux

This morning will be off. After breakfast, you will have time to relax for a few hours, before taking our bus towards your next destination: Avignon.

Often referred to as the "City of Popes" because of the presence of popes and antipopes from 1309 to 1423 during the Catholic schism, Avignon is currently the largest city and capital of the département of Vaucluse. This is one of the few French cities to have preserved its ramparts, its historic center, the palace of the popes, Rocher des Doms, and the bridge of Avignon. It was classified a World Heritage Site by UNESCO under the criteria I, II and IV.

As a showcase of arts and culture, the fame of its annual theatre festival, known as the Festival of Avignon, has far exceeded the French borders.

Tonight you will enjoy dinner with your companions.

Tomorrow will be a special day for you. While it is a rest day for the Tour de France, you will enjoy a dream for bike riders. Tomorrow you will climb the Giant of Provence, Mont Ventoux.

Tuesday, July 10th: Day 5

Group: Climb Mont Ventoux

Hotel: 3* hotel near Mont Ventoux

Your challenge is to climb the famous Giant of Provence, Mont Ventoux. Ventoux is not included in the Tour this year, but was first included in 1951 the year when Lucien Lazarides was first to the top. He went on to finish in third in Paris. It has since been the scene of many battles including the grudge match between Armstrong and Pantani. With Armstrong ceding the stage to Pantani for which Pantani never forgave him, saying it demeaned his victory.

On the north side of Ventoux the mountain borders the Department of the Drome. It is the largest mountain in the region. As the name suggests, "vent" means wind in French, it can get windy at the summit.

A few short kilometers from Bédoin, you will start the climb from the most popular, and also the steepest side. Pace yourself for the test, for reaching the top is worth the effort. You'll have plenty of company and you will meet people of all ages on all types of bikes. It's like riding with an extended family. The views from the top are magnificent, especially towards the mountain chains to the North.

Wednesday, July 11th: Day 6

Group: Ride “à la carte”

Hotel: 3* hotel near Mont Ventoux

There is no specific program planned for today. Nevertheless, our staff will remain available for some training “à la carte” in the area. Our back up vehicle will also be at your disposal.

If you prefer, you will be free to take it easy and relax at the hotel or enjoy the surrounding area. The Provence is a region chosen by artists, the best known being Van Gogh, for its climate, colors and warmth. Your trip will take you through some of the same beautiful countryside where you will see small villages, medieval fortifications,...

Thursday, July 12th: Day 7

Group: Transfer to Pau

Hotel: 3* hotel Montpensier in Pau

Today, you will head to Pau

Pau is famous for being the birthplace of the 16th century king of France Henry IV and was once used by Napoleon as a holiday home during his period in power. It has a small garden that was tended by Marie Antoinette when she spent her summers in the city. The château is now considered a French historical monument and contains a collection of tapestry.

Since 1930, Pau has become a mainstay of the Tour de France cycling race, thanks both to its geographical location and to its marvelous infrastructure. Pau hosted its 63rd stage in 2010, and only one other city besides Paris has done better. Next year, it will welcome for the 64th time the Tour de France and for the 7th time the Etape du Tour.

On the evening, you will have with the group and other Etape du Tour participants and enjoy local wines and traditional dishes.

ACT II: Pau – Bagnères de Luchon July 14th, 2012:

PAU / BAGNERES DE LUCHON (197 km)



Col d'Aubisque: 7.1 %, 16.4 km, 1709 meters

Col du Tourmalet : 7.4 %, 19 km, 2115 meters

Col d'Aspin: 4.8 %, 12.4 km, 1489 meters

Col de Peyresourde: 6.7 %, 9.5 km, 1559 meters

For the start of the 2nd Act, the organizers chose a start town very well familiar with the Tour de France and the Etape du Tour: Pau. This Act will be a “royal journey” for those who will dare attacking the mythical Pyrenean climbs on this almost 200 km long stage.

Friday, July 13th: Day 8

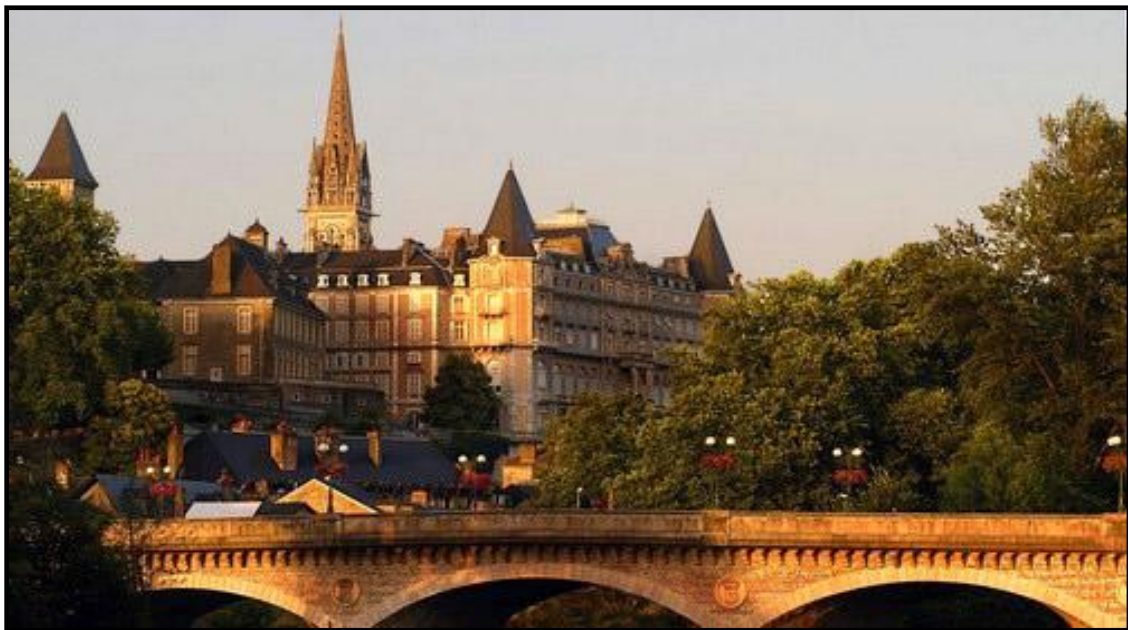
Group: Day off / Visit of the village

Hotel: 3* hotel Montpensier in Pau

You will start the day with a plentiful breakfast with menu options that will help fuel you up for this last preparation day.

After breakfast, you will need to pick up your bib number at the village. You'll be free to do so at your convenience. The village is also where all the major European manufacturers will be present.

The afternoon will be off: you will have time to go for an easy ride and scout the first miles of the Etape du Tour: a nice way to get your legs primed for the ultimate day.



Pau

On the last evening before the race, you will relax over a dinner especially prepared to give you all the energy that you will need for the upcoming challenge.

Saturday, July 14th: Day 9

Group: D-Day: Etape du Tour

Hotel: 3* hotel Majestic in Luchon

Today is the day! This is your opportunity to live up to the same challenge as the professionals.

The race's start time is 7.00am but you will be required to be at the start line by 6:30am. After an early breakfast, the ride to the starting line will help you warm up.

Before you leave the hotel, our staff will stop by and pick up your luggage in order to bring it to your next stop in Bagnères de Luchon. Please make sure that you have all your bags ready and tagged with your name.



Here again we recommend you bringing your own supply (water, gel, energy bars...).

Once you have crossed the finish line, you will be able to ride directly to the hotel. You can also make a stop first at the village and wait for your friends. At the hotel, you will be able to relax, re-hydrate and share your impressions before dinner.



Sunday, July 15th: Day 10

This morning's breakfast will be enjoyed with a great sense of accomplishment. You deserve to feel proud and we hope that you will be encouraged to participate next year. An event like this is also an opportunity to make new friends, and this morning will be your last chance to say goodbye and perhaps exchange email addresses, before you take the coach to the airport.

You'll leave the hotel in Bagnères de Luchon and return to Toulouse airport:

Bagnères de Luchon-Toulouse: 146 km (91 miles), 1 hour 50 min

We will operate 2 airport transfers:

Hotel to Toulouse – Departing at 8am, arriving at 9:50am

Hotel to Toulouse – Departing at 11am, arriving at 12:50pm

RATES:

- Etape du Tour extended program 10 days / 9 nights in 3* hotels on half board (Room sharing in twin or double): **Euros 2150,00(1)**
- Etape du Tour extended program 10 days / 9 nights in 3* hotels on half board (Single room): **Euros 2420,00**
- Etape du Tour extended program 10 days / 9 nights in 3* hotels on half board – non competitor: **Euros 1940,00**

The entries to the Etape are not included in this program. You can buy them separately on the official Etape du Tour website at <http://www.letapedutour.com/>.

In order to secure your package, a deposit of 35% will be required at time of registration, the balance will then be due between May 15th and 31st, 2012.

THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- Accommodation for 9 nights in three-star hotel in La Léchère, La Toussuire, Mont Ventoux area, Pau and Bagnères de Luchon: rooms with private bathroom including toilets, a tub and / or a shower.
- 9 Breakfasts, and 9 dinners, drinks (wine and water) included.
- Transfers in a private coach
- Transfer of your personal items from the start to the finish of the stages.
- Box trailer / van for the safekeeping and transport of your bike in your bike bags/ boxes.
- Ronan Pensec Travel Welcome Package.
- Local taxes
- Services of our guide.

THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Entries to the Etape du Tour (2)
- Lunches.
- Personal hotel expenses, mini bar, telephone, room service.
- Travel and personal insurance.
- Airfare

(1) Please note that if you are travelling by yourself but are willing to share your room with another single participant, we will do our best to find you a roommate. Should we not be in a position to do so and you end up therefore staying in a room by yourself, we will have to charge you the single room rate.

(2) The entry is not included in this program, and has to be purchased separately. If you have not been able to buy it from ASO, we can secure it for you. Don't hesitate to ask us.

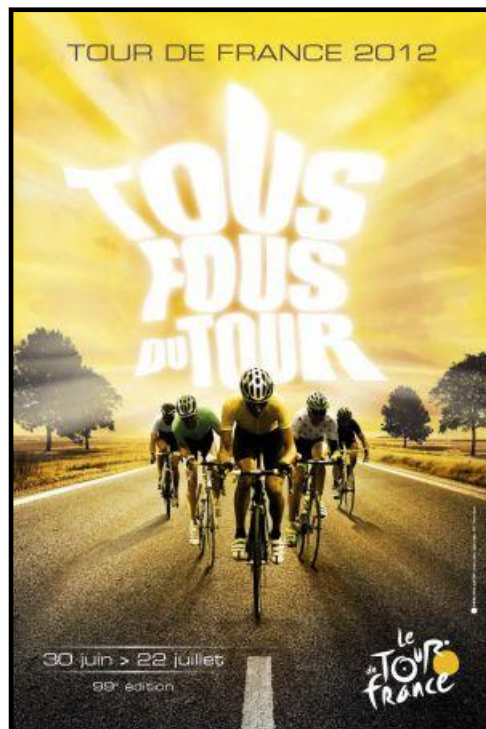
OPTION:

If you have always dreamed of not only seeing the Tour de France, but also riding the same stages ahead of the pros, we can help you create a Tour de France experience that can't be equalled.

This will be a good opportunity to combine the challenge of riding the Etape with the viewing of some of the most important stages of the Tour de France: a nice reward for all the efforts put in during these past months!

Ronan Pensec, with his 13 years of professional racing, and 25 years of experience with the Tour de France, has designed a variety of tour programs to choose from.

For more information, please contact us at info@ronanpensectravel.com.



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