

GRAND TOUR OF TUNISIA AND SAHARA DESERT



Date: Late April / early May TBC
Type of Tour: Adventure,
Long Distance, Luxury,
Historical Interest,
Mountains & Lakes

This exciting African tour lasts 16 days and promises to be a real treat. With 800 miles of sandy Mediterranean beaches, luxury hotels and delicious food, you will be spoilt for choice.

Landmarks such as Roman and Carthaginian archaeological sites, medieval walled medinas, the film sets of Luke Skywalker and Obi Wan Kenobi in Star Wars, as well as the spectacular Sahara desert will create a real sense of enchantment during your trip.

Although aimed at couples and solos on a touring bike, there will also be opportunities for some off-road forays into the desert for solo riders who bring GS models, or similar.

This is a spectacular new tour with a ride through France and some stunning new sights in North Africa, with four and five star accommodation in Tunisia.

Day 1 – Dover to Calais to Champagne

The tour begins with an early morning Channel ferry crossing,

allowing time for breakfast and an on-board briefing. Once ashore, we will take a ride across northern France to the heart of the Champagne region for our first overnight stop. This is one of our favourite hotels, situated amongst vineyards and boasting an outdoor pool. Dinner tonight is included. (Mileage: 210)

Day 2 – Champagne to Macon

After a buffet breakfast the ride will continue south, through the Haut Marne region, towards the wine lands of Beaune and Macon, with coffee and lunch en route. The next overnight stop is close to the town of Macon, in a centrally located hotel. Tonight you are free to dine at the restaurant of your choice. (Mileage: 250)

Day 3 – Macon to Marseilles

Today we continue south, travelling through the valley of the Rhone, past Lyon and Valence, and into the region of Languedoc. The route then heads towards the cosmopolitan port of Marseilles, where we will stay the night in order to be close to the port for the morning. Tonight everyone dines at a restaurant of their choice. (Mileage: 240)

Day 4 – Ferry to Tunis

After a short ride to the port we will catch the late morning

overnight ferry to Tunis. Cabin accommodation with en suite facilities will be reserved for everyone. Solo riders will usually share twin berth cabins but upgrades and sole occupancy may be available, subject to availability and a surcharge. There will also be time to relax, eat, drink and have an update briefing on the programme ahead, before retiring for the evening.

Day 5 – Tunis to Sidi Bou Said

Arrival in Tunis is at approximately 09.00hrs. We are unable to check into the hotel until after lunch so will enjoy a relaxing ride to the beautiful resort of Hammamet, an old fishing village that has now been transformed for tourism. Here, there is a promenade with cafes, restaurants and ice cream parlours where you can have lunch before returning to our four star hotel in Sidi Bou Said. (Mileage: 70)

Day 6 – Free day

Today you are free to spend the day at leisure, exploring Tunis. Check out the boulevards and chic restaurants, which are more like the south of France than Africa, or visit the ancient Medina and Souks, with pottery, silverware, leather and carpets. Otherwise, Carthage is a short ride away, where you can see the

remains of the Roman settlement and the National Museum of Carthage.

Day 7 – Sidi Bou Daid to Sfax

Leaving Sidi Bou Daid, we will ride south away from Tunis, through Kairouan and towards the Gulf of Gabes. On the way we will visit El Jem, a World Heritage site of the third largest Roman Colosseum in the world. Just beyond El Jem is the resort town of Sfax, the second largest city in the Tunisia. It has one of the most fascinating medinas outside of Tunis, and you will be free to explore it during part of the afternoon. This is also our base for the night, where we will stay at a luxurious five star hotel. (Mileage: 165)

Day 8 – Sfax to Jerba

Today the ride continues around the bay through Gabes, once a great destination for the camel trains of the Sahara. Further round the bay is the beautiful Il de Jerba, offering all the elements that make up most people's ideal holiday destination: sandy beaches, cafes, restaurants, souvenirs and much more. We will stay here for two nights in another luxurious five star hotel. (Mileage: 155)

Day 9 – A free day

Another free day to spend by the pool, in the shops, or relaxing. Alternatively, the more adventurous can take a short ride out into the desert to see the locations where many Star Wars films were made, and walk in the footsteps of Luke Skywalker!

Day 10 – Jerba to Tamerza

Today we will ride inland, across the northern Sahara desert, along the Jebel Tebaga and across the huge salt flats of the Chott

El Jerid. We will then carry on through Tozeur, with an overnight stop in the oasis of Tamerza. Our accommodation for the night is a centrally located four star hotel. (Mileage: 240)

Day 11 – Tamerza to Tabarka

An early start today, for one of the few long days on the bikes. The tour now turns north, through Gafsa, as we head back through the mountains towards the northern coastline. Our destination is the resort of Tabarka, home to many music festivals and a hot-bed for scuba diving. Here we will base ourselves in a centrally located, luxury five star hotel for the next two nights. (Mileage: 280)

Day 12 – Free day

Today is a free day and the choices are endless...the beach, the marina, the Old Harbour Bay, the Roman amphitheatre, horse and camel riding, or some great riding in the surrounding mountains – the choice is yours! Alternatively, there is always the hotel pool and a cold drink!

Day 13 Tabarka to Tunis

We have an early start on Day 13 as we ride back to Tunis along the coast, ready to catch the overnight ferry back to Marseilles. Once again, cabins have been reserved and you can relax and dine on board during our return to France. (Mileage: 110)

Day 14 Tunis to Annecy

Upon arrival in Marseilles we will head north towards the Alps region, via Gap and Grenoble, and on to the picturesque setting of Annecy. Here we will stay in a hotel overlooking the lake. Annecy is a warren of tiny cobble streets and a huge selection of excellent

restaurants for the evening. (Mileage: 250)

Day 15 – Annecy to Troyes

After leaving Annecy, we will head north, through Burgundy and past Dijon, before continuing on towards the Champagne region. For the last night of the tour we will stop in the city of Troyes, where we will spend the night and enjoy a final group dinner together. (Mileage: 270)

Day 16 – Troyes to Calais

Once away from the Champagne region, it is a simple run back to Calais to catch the late afternoon ferry to Dover. You have the choice of a fast ride on the Autoroute, or a cross-country option with some great riding to round off the tour. (Mileage: 250)

Rider Price: t.b.c.
Couple Price: t.b.c.

Tour includes: return ferry fare from Dover to Calais, halfboard in Champagne, B&B in Macon, B&B in Marseilles, overnight return ferry to Tunis with cabins, B&B in Sidi Bou Said for two nights, B&B in Sfax, B&B in Jerba for two nights, B&B in Tabarka for two nights, B&B in Annecy, halfboard in Troyes, the programme as described, all the necessary maps and route details, travel pack, local overnight parking charges, a tour leader to accompany the group and VAT

Not included: fuel, tolls, meals other than those specified; wine & drinks; local entertainments not included in the programme; any admissions; travel insurance.

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