

## Bicycle Tours in USA: Sonoma Bike Tour

### OVERVIEW

Get acquainted with Northern California's Wine Country and the Pacific Coast on our six-stage Sonoma Bike Tour that even the pros would envy. We'll expose you to valleys of world-famous vineyards, forests of massive redwoods, perfect pastoral landscapes and the captivating California Coast. We spend the entire week in Sonoma, the neighboring county just to the west of Napa Valley. Sonoma's roads are exceptional for cycling accommodating a range of abilities. Our Sonoma Bike Tour has been designed to offer a comprehensive cycling experience within California's celebrated Wine Country.

This trip is designed as a loop so you can drive to and from the tour in case you prefer not to fly. Save \$200 if you decide to bring your own bike.

**Dates:** Pick a date below or select your own date, starting on a Sunday. We are able to operate this tour with 4 or more people. Price changes may apply for 4 people. Given the unique circumstances surrounding travel we understand if you are more comfortable traveling in a private group.

### HIGHLIGHTS

Enjoy carefully curated bike routes, savor some delicious farm-to-table meals and sample local wines, experience a range of scenery from vineyards to Pacific Ocean vistas with rides among redwoods and along mountain ridges.

### TOUR FACTS

<b>Tour Style</b>	■ Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at <a href="https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/classic">https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/classic</a>
<b>Includes</b>	5 nights accommodation, double occupancy; meals as noted in itinerary; activities as outlined in itinerary; ride-friendly snacks and beverages throughout each day; hybrid or alloy road bike rental – carbon road bike or E-bike available for an upgrade fee (\$100 for carbon; \$200 for e-bike); professional trip leader(s); van support & portage service; reusable water bottle & luggage tags.
<b>Countries</b>	USA
<b>Begin/End</b>	Petaluma, CA
<b>Arrive/Depart</b>	San Francisco International Airport (SFO)
<b>Total Distance</b>	360 km (222 miles)
<b>Avg. Daily Distance</b>	60 km (37 miles) per riding day
<b>Tour Level</b>	▶▶▶▶▶

**Please Note:** We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the ■ [online itinerary](#) for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/bike-tours/usa/sonoma-BSA>

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### DATES & PRICES

### DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	63km / 366m (39mi / 1200ft)			
2	64km / 671m (40mi / 2200ft)			
3	61km / 549m (38mi / 1800ft)			
4	63km / 610m (39mi / 2000ft)			
5	55km / 793m (34mi / 2600ft)			
6	51km / 823m (32mi / 2700ft)			

## Bicycle Tours in USA: Sonoma Bike Tour

### Meet in Petaluma, Bike to Healdsburg

**Highlights** Russian River wine growing region

After meeting in Petaluma, CA (~10 am, less than 1-hr drive north of San Francisco) for introductions and a brief orientation meeting, you'll bike through rolling oak and grassy terrain, then continue through the Russian River wine growing regions into Healdsburg. We're spending the duration of the 6-day trip in Sonoma County, the lesser known area just west of Napa County. Sonoma features world-class wine and dining as well as exceptional cycling routes. Tonight we enjoy dinner at a favorite spot in downtown Healdsburg. Sleep well in our lodging for the next three nights.

### DAY 1: Sun, Sep 6th

**Distance** 63 km (39 mi)

**Gain** 366 m (1200 ft)

**Meals** Dinner

**Lodging** ■ Best Western Dry Creek Inn

### Dry Creek & Alexander Valley Loop

**Highlights** Loop ride, winery visit

Beginning in the heart of the Dry Creek Valley we'll ride north up to the overview at Lake Sonoma before we traverse east into the awaiting embrace of Alexander Valley, full of wineries and butted-up against volcanic mountains. This afternoon we'll take the opportunity to visit a guide-favorite winery and enjoy a guide-prepared picnic. Dinner tonight will be at another favorite spot in Healdsburg.

### DAY 2: Mon, Sep 7th

**Distance** 64 km (40 mi)

**Gain** 671 m (2200 ft)

**Meals** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**Lodging** ■ Best Western Dry Creek Inn

### Bike Chalk Hill Loop

**Highlights** Chalk Hill, winery visit

After breakfast we'll ride through another part of Alexander Valley for an honest climb up and over Chalk Hill, known for its excellent grape growing conditions, which delivers us along the edge of the Russian River Valley. This afternoon we'll take the opportunity to visit another guide-favorite winery. Dinner tonight will be on your own with many selections to choose from in Healdsburg.

### DAY 3: Tue, Sep 8th

**Distance** 61 km (38 mi)

**Gain** 549 m (1800 ft)

**Meals** Breakfast, Lunch

**Lodging** ■ Best Western Dry Creek Inn

## Bicycle Tours in USA: Sonoma Bike Tour

### Bike Healdsburg to Bodega Bay

**Highlights** Coastal redwoods

Today's ride will bring us into the heart of the majestic coastal redwoods – among the tallest trees on the planet. At Armstrong Redwoods State Park [Note: The park has been closed in the wake of fires from Aug 2020, but is due to reopen “sometime in 2021”. If it isn't, rest assured we'll still bike among redwoods on the route], you can enjoy an optional walk among 1,400-year-old trees that tower over 300 feet high and create a unique microclimate. After lunch on your own in one of the small towns along the Russian River, you'll continue out to the rugged Pacific Coast and south along the Pacific Coast Highway to the town of Bodega Bay.

### Occidental Loop

**Highlights** Ride to Bodega Bay and celebratory dinner

Our route today brings us through the hamlet of Bodega, where parts of the Alfred Hitchcock film, *The Birds*, were filmed. We'll pedal back through the redwoods to the bohemian town of Occidental and on to one of our favorite routes, Coleman Valley Road, which has been featured in the Tour of California cycling stage race. Our final group dinner is at a nearby favorite spot where, among other regional specialties, you can enjoy some locally-grown oysters cultivated in nearby Tomales Bay as part of the aquaculture operations there.

### Bike Coastal Ranch Roll

**Highlights** Ride and return to Petaluma

Spin out the legs on a loop ride in Sonoma's golden farmland. Coastal views and rolling hills are the highlight for this morning's final cool down. After returning to Bodega Bay, you'll have time to clean up and check out before we'll transfer you (35-min) back to Petaluma (arriving ~ 12:30 pm) where we will say goodbye and you can continue your adventure as you please!

### DAY 4: Wed, Sep 9th

**Distance** 63 km (39 mi)**Gain** 610 m (2000 ft)**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner**Lodging** ■ [The Inn at the Tides](#)

### DAY 5: Thu, Sep 10th

**Distance** 55 km (34 mi)**Gain** 793 m (2600 ft)**Meals** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**Lodging** ■ [The Inn at the Tides](#)

### DAY 6: Fri, Sep 11th

**Distance** 51 km (32 mi)**Gain** 823 m (2700 ft)**Meals** Breakfast

**INCLUDED**

**WHAT'S INCLUDED**

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include what we believe are the most important aspects of a bike tour.

- On all our guided tours, you can expect superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling.
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel. Plus, all the logistics are taken care of.

**PRE-TRIP SUPPORT**

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing EP!
- \*Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (\*Explorer and Self-guided tour styles excluded)
- See "What's Included" for tour-specific inclusions and be sure to check the "Keep in mind" section under "Tour Summary" online.

**BICYCLES**

For a full list of what's included with your bike see: <https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/>. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer and Self-guided tours we include a GPS device on all bikes.

**NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:**

On a guided tour, each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. On a self-guided tour you'll receive a comprehensive orientation and bike fit on the first or second morning of your trip. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to

RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information on the RWGPS Experience includes important phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks.

On a guided tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths. On a self-guided tour you will have luggage transfers that will transport your bags from one hotel to the other.

**Need More Miles?** On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options or ask when you are planning your self-guided trip.

**Need Fewer Miles?** On a guided tour, the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. On a self-guided tour we recommend you review the tour level to make sure you can ride the full distance.

**ON A GUIDED TOUR: TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADERS**

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5-8% of the tour cost per traveler — this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know.

\*Tips are included in Expedition pricing and not expected on self-guided tours.

**PHOTOS:**

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or that are taken by our guides or other travelers, in any medium, including but not limited to print, electronic media, or Internet, free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you, you must inform us or your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

## STYLES

### OUR TOUR STYLES

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers.

**Classic Tours:** Dream of traveling through a region by bike? Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: 2-3 tour leaders, van support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

**Explorer Tours:** Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: 2 tour leaders, GPS and van support
- Price: \$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

**Bike and Boat Tours:** Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip except for land extension.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation and support: 2 tour leaders, van Support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

**Expedition Tours:** Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation and support: 2-3 tour leaders, van Support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

**Self-guided Tours:** perfect for those who have an independent spirit, want the flexibility to choose their own dates, and don't need van support or tour leaders during their trip. Every departure is a private tour!

- Tour Length: 6-8-days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel on bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: GPS routes and luggage transfers
- Price: \$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

## LEVELS

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

### LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

### LEVEL 2 - 2.5

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

### LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

### LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 — 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

### LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

### REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

## CHECKLIST

### TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation and After you Book Information (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- Complete the Customer Information Form: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/customer-information-form/>
- We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/travel-insurance/>
- Choose a bicycle training program: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>
- Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>

### 6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Refer to your Tour Packet/Itinerary to see step-by-step arrival and departure information for your tour, meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, along with other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- Begin your chosen training program
- Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail which we send 10 days prior to the due date for detailed instructions.

### 6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists for suggestions, and see luggage limits at <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/packing/>.
- We'll email you your access code to Digital Daysheets, Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders, emergency phone numbers, and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date. All this will be provided to you via a feature called Experiences via the RideWithGPS App (tracks available but not necessary for navigation on Classic, Expedition and Bike & Boat tours).

### DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!