10 Day Provence and French Alps Tour, including Mont Ventoux by day and night, La Marmotte, Col du Glandon, Col du Telegraphe, Col du Galibier and Alpe d'Huez.

Dates: 15 June - 24 June 2015
Cost: $4,500

Inclusions: All tour transport and support vehicles, transfers, support staff, quality accommodation, welcome dinner and farewell dinner, daily breakfast, mechanical assistance, sightseeing, maps, daily itinerary and briefings.

Additional tour options can be arranged by request: lunch and dinner bookings, bike hire, insurance, pre/post tour travel arrangements, and anything else you want really!
Our Tour starts and ends in Lyon, or as arranged when booking.

Provence

Olive groves, vineyards and fields of lavender bathed in the legendary light that inspired artists from Van Gogh to Cezanne. This is the land of Jean de Florette and away from the big towns and cities has hardly changed since Napoleon's day.

Contrary to popular belief Mont Ventoux does not stick up on its own in the middle of a flat plain. Although not on a scale like The Alps or the Pyrenees, the hills and mountains surrounding Mont Ventoux on all 4 sides are stunning and perfectly situated to offer fantastic loop rides of varying difficulty.

To the south are the stunning Gorge de la Nesque and the village of Sault and to the east is the Plateau d'Albion which rises up to the second highest mountain in the region, the Montagne de Lure at 1800m. Between the Plateau d'Albion and the Baronries to the north is the 1212m Col de l'Homme Mort - Dead Man's Pass.

French Alps

Our Alpine base in Bourg d'Oisans has been used as a start town in the Tour de France on many occasions and is the perfect location for exploring some of the most famous Tour de France climbs.

Bourg d'Oisans and the bottom of Alpe d'Huez (which is only 4 minutes ride away), sits at 750 metres above sea level. It lies at the point at which six contrasting valleys meet, known collectively as the Oisans. It has been used as a start town in the Tour de France on many occasions - the last being in 2008. Due to its central location in this area, all Tour rides will end with an amazing alpine decent into and along the valley back into town.

The town has a population of approximately 3000 people which swells in the summer season with its cycling visitors. The bustling market town has a whole host of bars, restaurants, patisseries and a number of bike stores. When you are not cycling, the town has a great outdoor swimming pool, along with a tennis and squash centre, Museums and a small cinema.

June is the month that kicks off summer in France, which means the country is alive with outdoor markets and summer festivals. With temperatures in the mid to high 20s (°C) in Provence and the Alps, you’ll be able to enjoy the warm respite from Adelaide’s winter.
DAY 1

Monday 15 June - Collected from your arrival point as agreed. Welcome lunch and briefing. Afternoon 50km group ride to stretch the legs, including the Col de Fontaube. Welcome Dinner.

DAY 2

Tuesday 16 June - Mont Ventoux by day (The Bedoin Route). After breakfast, a fully supported 85km loop ride including the Giant of Provence, we’ll stop for lunch then head back to the accommodation for a few hours rest.

DAY 3

Wednesday 17 June - After breakfast we have a 65km fully supported ride today which includes the Category 2 Col de Maquegne. Depending on the weather, today is the first option of a night time ascent of Mont Ventoux; departing at 7pm with a total ride distance of 45km (our vehicles transport you and your bike back from the top of Ventoux).

Imagine the bragging rights; many riders have conquered Ventoux by day, but how many have ascended it at night and stood at the top in the darkness, with just the millions of stars for company? If we are lucky and it’s a clear night, the top “bald” section of Ventoux (from Chalet Reynard) lights up in the moonlight - This will be one of the tour highlights.

DAY 4

Thursday 18 June - After breakfast we head off on a fully supported 110km circuit around Mont Ventoux. The terrain is undulating, but without any major climbs and includes the Gorge de la Nesque and the Toulourenc Valley. This is a beautiful ride that will just blow your socks off. Today is our second opportunity for a night ride up Ventoux.

DAY 5

Friday 19 June - After breakfast today we have an easier day in the saddle with a 50km group ride which has one major climb in the Category 2 Col de Maquegne.

Depending on the weather (and your legs) this evening is the final opportunity of the Tour to ride Mont Ventoux at night.

DAY 6

Saturday 20 June - Today we transition to the Alps, departing at 9am for the drive to Le Bourg d’Oisans. After lunch there’s an afternoon 50km group ride to La Montée de Besse en Oisans. The flat section after Bourg-d’Oisans and the climb up to the Chambon barrage are good for strengthening your legs before making the short climb up to Besse-en-Oisans.

DAY 7

Sunday 21 June - Today is the day of legends - two fully supported ride options today which include either an early start to replicate the 182km La Marmotte, or alternatively riders can be transported 60km
into La Marmotte route (which removes the first big ascent of the day, the Glandon) to the base of La Telegraphe to start the challenge from there. Either option provides long and varied Cols and take in some legendary mountain passes and even one of the biggest mountains in the Alps the Galibier, as well as 32.5 km of climbs (for the full route), inclines of up to 14% and of course both of today's options finish with an ascent of Alpe d'Huez.

**DAY 8**

Monday 22 June - Today's ride provides a number of options, including a rest day for those riders so inclined, a fully supported ascent of the Glandon, or a tour guide led exploration of a couple of hidden gems of the Oisans Department:

a. **La Grimpee de Villard Notre Dame** - The ascent of this spectacular road will remain an unforgettable memory for every cyclist! The climb is very hard, and the road leads through three pitch dark tunnels, so lights are essential. We will lunch in the village cafe.

b. **La Grimpee de d'Oulles** - This narrow road is a little jewel of persistency. Old locals will remember the roadmen clinging to these vertical rocks to make their way straight through them when the road was built. The 7km of hairpin bends are quite strenuous, but the uphill ride remains pleasant on this wooded slope with pine trees, sheltered from the wind, where you can breathe in the lovely smell of pine needles which is so reminiscent of the Mediterranean.

**DAY 9**

Tuesday 23 June - Alpe d'Huez on steroids - La boucle. This route, which is clearly signposted as “Isère à vélo no.1” from La Garde (bend no.16), is a real delight for all bike enthusiasts! Starting with the infamous climb up the 21 switchbacks to Alpe d'Huez, we will then regroup and then go over the majestic, untamed Col de Sarenne, before plunging into the Ferrand Valley along a lovely, winding road. Carry on with a climb up to the Auris balconies, offering you a fabulous view over the Romanche Valley. It'll take your breath away!

Dinner is included tonight, with a casual “Awards” ceremony and the opportunity to relive images of the tour highlights.

**DAY 10**

Wednesday 24 June - After breakfast for riders not requiring onward transfers, a tour guide led ride will depart at 9am for a 50-60km route which will include a stop at a local wood fired bakery, and for those who are being transferred today we will have you on the road by 9:30am.