



# *Cycling*

through  
France

Tips, tricks and recommendations for planning a successful and memorable cycling trip to France.

---

By Tim Marsh

## About the Author

---

I am *very* excited by life.

Whether through my surfing travels, love of **snowboarding**, love of **coffee**, love of **travel and taking photos**, efforts to drag myself from **cubicle madness** (whilst encouraging and enabling others to do the same), or my general sense of wonder and amazement at the world around me, I am always smiling and enjoying life and always finding something to do and people to engage with.

I love life a lot.

### Legal Stuff

© 2009 tdf tips.com, shredquest.com and projectheresy.com – all material is copyright, especially the photos.

Tourdefrancetips.com, tdf tips.com and shredquest.com are operational subsidiaries of Project Heresy.

No part of this guide is meant to be republished or reproduced on the web without permission – this means forums, torrent sites and so on. Sure, I'm not going to be able to stop you sending it to your mates, nor do I want to. Just don't be lame and go posting it everywhere, ok? A lot of time (and money) was spent on bringing this to you, so it'd be great if you could respect that.

I'd much prefer if you joined my affiliate scheme [here](#). You can then mention or link to the guide in your interweb travels, use your affiliate link to link to it, and then get a nice (50% at time of publication) commission of any referred sales.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED: You do not have any rights to sell or profit from this report. All content is to remain unedited and all links must stay in tact as they are. You can not claim any type of ownership without express written permission from the creator and only the creator, Tim Marsh. All rights to this report belong to the author only.

DISCLAIMER: All information contained within this report is strictly the views represented by the author, at time of publication. Said author can and does reserve the right to add to, change, alter or update the thoughts and opinions stated herein. Every attempt has been made to accurately substantiate all information in said report. However, the author, his partners and affiliates make no warranty to nor do they take responsibility for any errors or exclusions that may be contained in within.

## About the Guide

---

Do you think planning a cycling trip to France has to be hard?

Think you need to pay a load of money at a tour company to organize your Tour de France (or cycling in France) trip?

Follow this guide and you'll save yourself loads of your valuable time and money, as well as maximizing your enjoyment of your trip.

This guide is almost entirely content-only, apart from a few images, which are there to get you excited about cycling in France as well as break up the INCREDIBLE (yes, in capitals) amount of information in this guide.

There are some affiliate links throughout the Ebook that link to products or services that I use myself. I debated whether to include these, but given I only recommend totally awesome companies and services that I think are worth checking out, I figure you wouldn't mind if I included them. These affiliate links provide a (sometimes very) small amount of commission on sales.

I have an affiliate program in place for this guide, which you can join [here](#) (Project Heresy is the vehicle that all my other web interests sit in). If you refer a sale of this Ebook, you'll get a nice (50% at time of printing) commission from the sale. Generous? Yep, it's how I roll.

Where dollar amounts are stated without a currency (i.e. "\$100"), assume it is in Australian dollars. You can convert AUD to your currency at [xe.com](http://xe.com).

The guide is not, and does not pretend to be, perfect. Nor does it contain every single piece of information about cycling in France or touring the Tour. It is, however, totally awesome and does cover a lot of very useful information designed to save you your valuable time and money, as well as making the planning process, and your trip, as pain-free as possible.

Any subsequent updates to this guide will be sent to all purchasers free of charge.

I hope you find this guide useful, and if you have any information or tips you feel ought to be included, or find any mistakes or omissions, please contact me on [tim@tdftips.com](mailto:tim@tdftips.com) or Tweet it to me using [@tdftips](https://twitter.com/tdftips). If the information is useful, at the very least it will appear on the website, and perhaps even an updated version of this guide (with attribution of course).

I'd really appreciate you sending any feedback my way by using the feedback form at [tdftips.com/contact](https://tdftips.com/contact), as it will allow me to provide a much more useful and relevant product.

## Welcome

---

I am very pleased (and excited) to welcome you to [tdftips.com's](https://tdftips.com) guide to planning a cycling trip to France!

Thanks for downloading this guide; I hope you find it extremely useful in your travels.

This guide covers various aspects of planning a cycling trip to France, but in particular focuses on the logistics involved in following the Tour de France and/or participating in the **L'Etape du Tour**. It is therefore very useful for anyone wanting to cycle in France, whether you take in the Tour de France and L'Etape or not.

I don't take into account any general sightseeing considerations, so if that ends up being part of the itinerary, you ought to take that into account and adjust your itinerary accordingly.

WELCOME

## Introduction

---

Planning my first trip to France for the 2009 Tour was an at times frustrating, but ultimately illuminating and rewarding, process.

In planning this trip, it became immediately obvious to me that there was not a readily-found, highly focused, central source of information that covered all the important aspects of traveling in France that would be useful for anyone planning a cycling trip, following Le Tour, or planning on doing L'Etape du Tour.

I ended up spending a lot of time researching (forums, Google etc) the best places to fly in, how to obtain extra baggage allowances (or minimize the cost at least), where to stay, how to get data roaming for my mobile phone, road toll information – and that's just for starters.

As I planned the trip, and then traveled in France, I thought that a simple guide covering all these – and more – aspects would be a useful tool; and thus this guide was born!

In it, you'll find information broken down into two sections; Planning and On the Ground, with detailed information covering:

- Initial Planning (stages, airports, airlines)
- Airlines and how bikes are treated in terms of baggage costs
- Airport-Airline route list for major routes around the world
- Mobile and data roaming tips and recommendations
- Watching the Tour – tips and things to watch out for
- Participating in L'Etape du Tour – planning, pitfalls, tips
- Tips for finding free wifi (free, unsecured)
- Coffee locations

- Road quality/types, travel times and what to expect at toll gates
- Car hire versus campervan hire – the pros and cons of each one
- Weather tips
- Places to base yourself for rides (e.g. the Cols)
- Critical and nice-to-have equipment list suggestions
- Contacts, and much more

In the end, I had a fantastic time, but spent a lot more time driving than I anticipated, saw a lot less Tour (both on the ground and on TV) than I wanted to and had some nasty expenses catch me unawares. All this served a useful purpose in identifying pitfalls that informed this guide, as well as providing a good basis for planning a better trip next year.

So, onto planning and executing an incredible cycling trip to France.

Table of Contents (Section titles are links)

---

**Planning**

Introduction ..... 11  
Stage Planning ..... 12

**Airline and Baggage Intelligence** ..... 15

Airport/Airline Information..... 16  
Bike Considerations..... 17  
Baggage Allowances..... 18  
Airline Baggage Allowance [CHART] ..... 20

**Accommodation** ..... 24

Introduction ..... 24  
Hotels ..... 24  
Camping ..... 25  
Campervanning ..... 26

**L'Etape du Tour** ..... 29

**Equipment** ..... 32

Riding Kit/Supplies ..... 32  
General and Tech ..... 33  
Bike Packing ..... 36

**Insurance** ..... 38

**Drivers License** ..... 39

**Mobile Phone Roaming** ..... 40



Table of Contents (Section titles are links)

---

**On the Ground**

**Introduction** ..... 42

**Campervan** ..... 43

**Off the Road** ..... 44

Road Quality..... 44

Tollways or “Peages”..... 44

Weather ..... 45

Travel Times ..... 46

Service Stations..... 47

Parking..... 47

**Camping** ..... 48

Booking vs Not Booking ..... 48

Where to Camp..... 48

Camping Facilities ..... 49

Costs ..... 49

**Food** ..... 50

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner ..... 50

Food Shopping ..... 50

**Weather**..... 52

**Wifi/Internet** ..... 53

Wifi..... 53

Internet ..... 53

Table of Contents (Section titles are links)

---

**On the Ground** (con't)

Rides .....	55
Cols [CHART] .....	56
<b>Watching the Tour</b> .....	57
<b>Must-Have French</b> .....	59
<b>Road Rules</b> .....	60
<b>L'Etape du Tour</b> .....	61
<b>Useful Links</b> .....	64
Specific Links .....	64
Road, General Info .....	65
Language .....	65
Camping .....	65
<b>Appendix: Major Global Airline Routes into the EU [CHART]</b> .....	66