

## Great Ocean Road & Great Alpine Road

Includes 'Around the Bay' event

Sunday 01 October, 2017 to Sunday 08 October, 2017

### Day to Day

Imagine waking up in the early daylight and looking around a comfortable motel room and wondering where you are. Is it on the doorstep of one of the most spectacular mountainous regions in Australia, or is it one of the most world renowned coastal destinations? Either way, you want to get up and start another day in the AllTrails cycle tour taking in two of the most stunning roads you'll ever experience - the Great Alpine Road and the Great Ocean Road.

The food breaks, morning tea, lunch and afternoon snack are set times enabling all riders to plan their day and the amount of time required to enjoy the sights and attractions along the way. Lunch is a great time to relax, refuel your body and chat to your friends, be it in a famous bakery, a country pub, next to a sparkling mountain stream or down by the sea. Cyclists move off knowing the distance and terrain ahead and aiming to arrive at the overnight stop around mid afternoon.

And the cycling is just the beginning. Once you're off your bike there's a plethora of farm gates, village cafes, award-winning wineries and restaurants dotted along every route to tempt the taste buds and recharge for the next challenge.

Your accommodation is excellent - you check in then have a cuppa and snack and shower or soak in the bath. Explore the surroundings, go for a walk, share a cool drink with friends or simply relax. It is your life, it's your ride, enjoy it.

A briefing for all cyclists at 6pm before the evening meal is always interesting, finding out what happened that day, and a run-down on the sights and special attractions to look out for the next day. Lots of laughs and stories are shared before we settle down to a good healthy meal and a few drinks. Bedtime is not far away, where you put your head down in salubrious surroundings, remembering the day and dreaming of tomorrow.

The camaraderie developed on a bike ride like this lasts a lifetime.

Location	Distance	Date	B	L	D	A
Melbourne PRE TOUR	NA	Sat 30 Sep 2017	--	--	--	--
Melbourne (train to Wangaratta) to Bright	78km	Sun 1 Oct 2017	--	Y	Y	Y
Bright to Omeo	110km	Mon 2 Oct 2017	Y	Y	Y	Y
Omeo to Bairnsdale	120km	Tue 3 Oct 2017	Y	Y	Y	Y
Bairnsdale to Stratford (train to Melbourne)	66km	Wed 4 Oct 2017	Y	Y	--	Y
Melbourne (train to Warrnambool) to Port Campbell	69km	Thu 5 Oct 2017	--	Y	Y	Y
Port Campbell to Apollo Bay	96km	Fri 6 Oct 2017	Y	Y	--	Y
Apollo Bay to Queenscliff	90/129km	Sat 7 Oct 2017	Y	Y	Y	Y
Queenscliff (ferry to Sorrento) to Melbourne	100km	Sun 8 Oct 2017	Y	Y	--	--
Total distance cycled	729km		6	8	5	7
Average daily distance	91km					

Meal and accom inclusions noted as B, L, D, A (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Accommodation)

### **Melbourne PRE TOUR — NA — Sat 30 Sep 2017 — - - - -**

PRE TOUR: What a time to be in Melbourne. Today is the AFL Grand Final and Melbourne will be abuzz with activity, excitement and fun - even if your team is not playing in the game. In fact even if you don't even have a team! Come a day or two early to experience the AFL festival events at Federation Square, the FREE Live Site located at Yarra Park outside the MCG (usually from Wednesday), The Grand Final Parade (on Friday), or go along to the MCG to watch the game outside on the big screen and then go in for free to the post-match celebration when the MCG gates are open to the public from 6pm. Not interested in the footy? Flying in to Melbourne in the afternoon on game day should see some cheaper airfares! Let us know if you have any questions about the days before the ride and how we can help you with your time in Melbourne.

### **Melbourne (train to Wangaratta) to Bright — 78km — Sun 1 Oct 2017 — L D A**

FIRST LEG - GREAT ALPINE ROAD: Your four day Great Alpine Road Cycle Tour starts at Southern Cross Station, 7am. We load bikes and luggage in to our vehicles and set you off on the train to Wangaratta. Arriving at approximately 10am, we all saddle up and ride a relatively flat, but very scenic 79km to Bright along the famous Great Alpine Road. Today's ride is through a magnificent valley with picturesque mountains and forest on either side which is a great way to start the tour and find your rhythm on the bike. Tonight we have a great motel and will all enjoy an evening meal together in Bright - this famously cycle-mad town up in the Vic High Country. It's a fun town that lives and breathes cycling - you'll love it.

### **Bright to Omeo — 110km — Mon 2 Oct 2017 — B L D A**

We start with a gentle but steady climb up to the charming and picturesque town of Harrietville at the foot of Mt Hotham and Mt Feathertop. Here we will take in a snack and water before hitting the big climb up Mt Hotham - 1500m in 30km. Our support bus will be on hand to take those cyclists up the mountain who want to skip the climb, and will be there to pick anyone up along the way who has given it a go but is ready for a lift to the top. This climb is tough but has spectacular views out and over the surrounding National Park as you wind in and out of the trees up the mountain. Don't worry if climbing this hill on your bike is not appealing to you - it's a beautiful ride in the bus as well! The good news is that after you've reached the Mt Hotham Summit Area (great photo opportunity) you have reached the highest point of the tour (around the half way point of today's ride) and from here you have 2 days of mostly downhill to the coast. The second half of today's ride takes you down through the Hotham Resort area and Dinner Plain, through the flatlands after Cobungra to the Kosciusko Lookout (make sure you stop for a photo), then another final downhill into Omeo, a quaint old gold-mining town sitting amongst stunning surrounds in every direction. A group dinner tonight will allow time for many stories of this long and challenging day.

### **Omeo to Bairnsdale — 120km — Tue 3 Oct 2017 — B L D A**

The Great Alpine Road just keeps serving up spectacular scenery on either side as you snake your way towards the coast today. Tambo Valley, Swifts Creek and the Ensay Winery will all wizz past before you hug the line of the Tambo River all the way to the base of Mt Elizabeth. We go over the hill as the river winds around the long way and

you will meet the river again just outside of Bruthen, famous for its Bullant Brewery. You can feel and notice the landscape and scenery change as you push through the last of the alpine forest region and into rural civilisation to Bairnsdale, a reasonably large town with plenty to explore before our group dinner tonight.

### **Bairnsdale to Stratford (train to Melbourne) — 66km — Wed 4 Oct 2017 — B L - A**

Today you will get a small taste of the Gippsland Lakes Region as we take the quiet road from Bairnsdale to Stratford which loops down close to the famous lakes of the area and provides views of wide open spaces of farmland and Nature Conservation Reserves. It's a nice 65km distance to finish off this leg of the tour before getting into Stratford for lunch and hopping on the train back to Melbourne. If you are continuing on to the second leg of the trip along the Great Ocean Road tomorrow then your accommodation in Melbourne tonight is included in your ride entry fees. If you are not joining the Great Ocean Road leg then you are more than welcome to also stay in our accommodation as an optional extra (see 'pricing' tab). Tonight in Melbourne it's up to you - get an early night, explore the city's famous laneways, restaurants, cafes or Chinatown, take a free tram ride around the CBD or the take a look around the MCG just a few days after the AFL Grand Final. There is lots to do - enjoy!

### **Melbourne (train to Warrnambool) to Port Campbell — 69km — Thu 5 Oct 2017 — L D A**

SECOND LEG - GREAT OCEAN ROAD: Your four day Great Ocean Road Cycle Tour starts at Southern Cross Station, 7am. We load bikes and luggage in to our vehicles and set you off on the train to Warrnambool. Arriving at approximately 11am, we all saddle up and ride a scenic 20km to Allansford Cheese Museum for lunch, then before you know it you'll be cycling the world famous Great Ocean Road. The grandeur of the Bay of Islands is stunning with sheer cliffs of limestone and rolling surf that will awaken your senses and fill you with exhilaration as you ride to Port Campbell in the heart of this shipwreck coast. Tonight we will all enjoy an evening meal together as you absorb the magnificent seaviews and sunset.

### **Port Campbell to Apollo Bay — 96km — Fri 6 Oct 2017 — B L A**

Leaving Port Campbell early, you rise above the cliffs to the unforgettable view and golden colours of Loch Ard Gorge and then the legendary Twelve Apostles Marine National Park. This is truly one of the most iconic locations in Australia and we will have plenty of time for a photo in front of the famous rocks before you pedal on past Princetown where the road leaves the coast for a while, cutting across the southern tip of land, Cape Otway. As you leave the ocean you begin climbing through the forest to the renowned Lavers Hill, deep in the Otway Ranges. This hill is a challenge for most riders and it is your choice to ride it, try it, or hop in the bus. Lunch at the top of Lavers Hill is a good refuelling stop with a few more ups and downs to come after lunch. The roller coaster ride on today's route will allow you magnificent views of the ocean before descending into Apollo Bay with its many restaurants and cafes for you to choose for your evening meal.

### **Apollo Bay to Queenscliff — 90/129km — Sat 7 Oct 2017 — B L D A**

This is it! The last stretch of the Great Ocean Road is squeezed between massive vertical cliffs and thunderous waves. An early morning start awakens your senses as the wild seas smash against the rocks below. Get into your rhythm and keep pushing as you take it all in; the hang gliders overhead, breathtaking views all around, and koalas

making their home in the gum trees around here (sometimes crossing the road for a new tree and a better view). This is very exciting ride as you climb up and down around the cliff faces, marvelling at the scenery, punctuated by inlets and villages like Lorne, Anglesea, then our lunch stop Torquay (90km), famous for their world surfing championships. Torquay is the official end of the Great Ocean Road and after lunch here you can hop in our support bus and skip the last 40km to Queenscliff. If you still have the legs, the route takes you through Ocean Grove before passing Point Lonsdale where you can view the dramatic scenery from high points along the ocean foreshore overlooking The Rip. This notorious ship entrance to Port Phillip Bay, where ocean and bay waters collide through a kilometre-wide channel, creates one of the world's most dangerous stretches of water. We finish the day in Queenscliff, a charming and cosy historic seaside village on the Bellarine Peninsula, with its elegant Victorian-era hotels, stately churches and quaint fishermen's cottages situated on the mouth of Port Phillip Bay. Tonight we get together to celebrate your journey, enjoying some laughs, stories and a nice dinner and drinks before heading to bed ready for your final day as a part of the Around the Bay event tomorrow.

### **Queenscliff (ferry to Sorrento) to Melbourne — 100km — Sun 8 Oct 2017 — B L**

Today is the day where our small riding group becomes thousands! We join the hugely popular 'Around the Bay' bike ride starting with an early morning ferry from Queenscliff to Sorrento followed by our last 100km push to Melbourne. Beach Road becomes a cycle path for thousands of eager riders from all walks of life during this annual event that finishes in Alexandra Gardens in Melbourne City. There is a truly festive atmosphere at the end of the ride as you pass through the finish arch. **Congratulations – what a ride!**

