



Epic Cycling Climbs

Epic Cycling Climbs Route 4: Ride through Italy's Aosta Valley & Piedmont and Switzerland - 10 day ride



This is a **852 km** journey with around **20,360 metres of climbing**, best enjoyed over ten days of riding. Beginning in **Bourg-Saint-Maurice** in France, the route crosses three countries and

some of the finest mountain landscapes of the Western Alps before finishing on the shores of **Lake Constance** in Lindau, Germany.

The first four days are spent in the **Aosta Valley**, one of the great mountain valleys of the Italian Alps. From here, the route climbs towards the **Great and Little St Bernard Passes**, crossing high Alpine terrain and linking quiet valleys, historic villages and spectacular mountain scenery. The character of the riding then changes as the route descends into the lower-lying foothills of **Piedmont**, where three days are spent exploring a gentler landscape of vineyards, wooded hills and the Italian lakes.

The final three days take the route across **Switzerland**, returning to the high mountains with climbs over the **Sankt Gotthard Pass** and **Oberalp Pass**. From Oberalp, the route reaches the source of the **Rhine**, before following the river downstream towards Lake Constance and the lakeside town of **Lindau**.

The stages are designed around roughly **2,000 metres of climbing per day**, with none exceeding 130 km. This keeps the daily distances manageable, while allowing plenty of time to enjoy the landscapes and stop along the way. However, some sections pass through remote mountain country where accommodation is limited, so the stages may need to be adjusted depending on where overnight accommodation is available.

This is a journey that captures the extraordinary variety of the Western Alps: towering high passes, quiet Italian valleys, vineyards and lakes, historic Alpine villages and fast mountain descents. There is the cobbled ascent to the Sankt Gotthard Pass on the old Tremolo Road and a little gravel along the way, adding to the sense of adventure. From the French Alps to the source of the Rhine and finally the shores of Lake Constance, this is a truly memorable traverse of the Western Alps.

[See the complete route here](#)



Day 1 (66km, 1,940m climbing): The journey begins in Bourg Saint Maurice in France from where it climbs the incredible Col de Petit St Bernard, heads into Italy via the Colle de St Carlo and finishes in the valley at Avise.

Day 2 (55km , 2,100m climbing): The day starts with a crunchy 500m climb to St Nicholas high above the Aosta valley. From there it continues 2/3 on the eastern side up the mountain to the Great St Bernard pass till the mountain village of Saint Remy.

Day 3 (97km, 2,310m climbing) : From there, an early morning ascent of the remainder climb to the Great St Bernard pass awaits followed by a long descent to the valley. The route stays above the valley floor and climbs the Colle del Panthaleone which also features in the Giro before descending to Chatillon.

Day 4 (76km, 1,990m climbing): The last day in the Aosta valley climbing the Col de Joux and then descending through the main valley to Piedmont where the day ends in Donato after a short climb.

Day 5 (70km, 1,870m climbing): The route turns onto small roads and through a more constant up and down along the Piedmontese foothills. It climbs two passes including the Bocchetto di Sessera pass, through rickety tunnels, past religious sanctuaries and always with great vistas. A fab day which mixes riding with local culture.

Day 6 (85km 2,150m climbing): This stage reaches the upper Italian lakes. It climbs the Alpe Noveis before reaching Lago di Orta. After circling around the northern end of the lake, the day comes to an end at the lower slopes of the Mottarone at Armeno. This is a very up and down ride with a number of climbs.

Day 7 (78km, 2,350m climbing): This is a demanding day at Lago Maggiore. There are two climbs on the agenda: Mottarone and the [Monte Morissolo](#). Both have steep gradients, are hot and sweaty but offer unrivalled views over the lakes. The day ends in Cannero Riviera on Lago Maggiore. There might even be time for a dip in the lake to cool off.

Day 8 (105km, 1,860m climbing): A transitional stage between the lakes and the Sankt Gotthard pass and a time to recover the legs a bit from the previous day. The ride continues along Lago Maggiore to Bellinzona and up the Ticino valley with a climb before reaching Aiollo at the foot of the Sankt Gotthard. From Chironico onwards, the ride starts to climb significantly and includes a 5km section of hard gradients before reaching Aiollo.

Day 9 (99km, 2,350m climbing): This is probably the hardest day riding of the trip. The route climbs up the Old Tremolo Road to the Sankt Gotthard pass which is largely on cobbles and which will take more energy than a smooth road. This is a bucket list climb though and after a medium long descent to Hospental, the route climbs the Oberalp pass, also the spring of the Rhine. There is a 35km downhill before the road climbs to Obersaxen and ends further down the valley in Valendas.

Day 10 (123km, 1,470m climbing): The last day of riding has a special surprise in store. After Tamins, the route tackles the Kunkelspass which is only partly paved and has sections of hard packed gravel and famous tunnels. As it is also quite steep, you might have to push your bike for 1-2 km but it is traffic free and truly enchanting. The downhill takes us on rickety roads to Bad Raganz and then via the Luzisteigpass to the Rhine valley and along the river on cycle paths to Lake Constance where the route ends in Lindau. If you want to shorten the end of this stage, there are train stations all along the Rhine valley in Austria. The first one being Feldkirch, lobbying as much as 40km off this stage.

The start at Bourg Saint Maurice and the end point of this route at Lindau can be reached by train which is a bonus. For a shorter ride, the route can be stopped after day 6 at Stresa on

Lago Maggiore which is also connected by train to Switzerland and France. Given that there are quite a variety of different road surfaces involved on this ride, the tire choice will be crucial.

[You can look up the route on Komoot here.](#)

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**From
Bourg-Saint-Maurice to...**



↔ **852 km** ↗ **20,360 m**



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