

# Giro d'Italia 2012

... Tuscany, Dolomites and Lake Como



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## Giro d'Italia - May 14 - 27th, 2012 (May 12-27th with Gran Fondo option)

Join us during the 2012 Giro d'Italia in Italy's most widely acclaimed locations: Tuscany; the Dolomites; and Lake Como. This 14 night trip captures more than the great cycling tradition of the Giro d'Italia, but place's steeped in history and nature, traditional towns and villages, stunning mountainous geography, fine Italian food and wine, and of course great riding and fun. It is Italian cycling and culture at its best. And for those that would like to participate in one of Italy's most prestigious Gran Fondo events you have the option of beginning on May 12th to partake in the Gran Fondo della Vernaccia in San Gimignano.

### Grano Fondo della Vernaccia (optional extra): Begins

**May 12th:** You will meet in San Gimignano on May 12 in preparation for the Gran Fondo della Vernaccia on the 13th. May 14th you will depart San Gimignano and ride to our Trequanda accommodation where we will meet the group for the start of the Giro trip. Meals: B

### Day 1: Tuscany (Start of Giro trip)

Arrive independently at Trequanda accommodation where you will meet trip host. The family owned and operated accommodation is a 336 hectare wine estate and has its origins dating back over 500 years. Surrounded by picture postcard countryside and quite back-roads the area is an oasis for cycling.

Meals: D

### Day 2: Floating through the Crete Ride: 75km or 45km

Our first ride in Tuscany focuses on the area of the Crete. This territory is a photographers dream, providing post-card images and landscapes ever so unique to Tuscany. The route on near perfect roads rides along ridges and hills of special atmosphere, connecting to a series of delightful medieval towns and villages.

Meals: B; D

### Day 3: Val d'Orcia Ride: 75km or 45km

We ride the World Heritage listed landscape's of the Val d'Orcia. including the stunning hilltop towns of Montepulciano and Pienza. From both you are treated to sweeping views over central and southern Tuscany.

Meals: B; D

### Day 4: Montalcino Ride: 40km

Today's riding excursion unravels in the classic Tuscan hilltop town of Montalcino. World famous for its exceptional red wine 'Brunello di Montalcino,' it sits on a lofty scenic ridge surrounded by vineyards dedicated to the production of its wine. Here we stay in a small traditional family operated hotel that offers breathtaking views over the Val d'Orcia.

Meals: B

### Day 5: Brunello Wine Trail: 100km or 50km

We travel into the heart of the World Heritage listed landscape of the Val d'Orcia, visiting the castle topped village of Castiglione d'Orcia & Monastery of Sant'Antimo. The day's itinerary includes a memorable lunch immersing within a small cellar of a local Brunello wine producer.

Meals: B; L



## Trip Inclusions

- 11 nights quality 3 and 4 star hotels
- 3 nights Tuscan wine estate
- Daily guided rides with experienced guides
- Italian Immersions Trip Host
- All land transportation from arrival in Trequanda to departure to Como station
- Support vehicle (Dolomites)
- Wine tasting - Montalcino
- 14 Breakfasts
- 1 lunch with wine
- 10 dinners (most with wine)
- Small group max 22 participants
- Gran Fondo option: 2 nights accommodation Gran Fondo entry, FREE bike hire

## Package Costs

\$5,745.00 twin-share

\$610.00 single supplement

\$495.00 Gran Fondo della Vernaccia (optional)

\$525.00 Bike Hire (aluminium); \$645.00 (carbon)

## EARLYBIRD BOOKINGS

All bookings received before October 31st will receive a \$250 discount.

A non-refundable deposit of AUD\$500 is required at the time of booking. We recommend that you purchase cancellation travel insurance at the same time.

## Not included

- International airfares & taxes
- Arrival transfers (available on request)
- Travel insurance - compulsory
- Bike hire (quality bikes available for hire on request)

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## Trip Itinerary

### Day 6: Mount Amiata and Bagno Vignoni (Spa Village): 100km or 40km

Today's ride takes us to delightful thermal springs of Bagno Vignoni. Participants have the choice of a longer ride via the slopes of Mount Amiata, a volcanic cone 1732m above sea level that dominates the landscapes of Southern Tuscany; or a shorter more direct route via San Quirico d'Orcia.

Meals: B; D

### Day 7: Transfer to Dolomites

Our base for the next 5 nights, we stay in a typical Tyrolean hotel (4 star) in small market town of Castlerotto. Each evening of our stay the hotel will prepare and serve us traditional meals of the region.

Meals: B; D

### Day 8: Sella Ronda Circuit: 65km

We ride the most famous circuit of the Dolomites, crossing 4 beautiful passes: Passo Gardena; Passo Campolongo; Passo Pordoi; and Passo Sella. Situated in heart of Dolomites and within UNESCO World Heritage landscapes the ride provides incomparable views and feelings of absolute exhilaration.

Three of the passes rise to above 2100m, with Passo Pordoi the highest at 2239m, reached via 33 numbered switchbacks. Not surprising then that these are imbedded in Italian cycling folklore.

Meals: B; D

### Day 9: Cortina d'Ampezzo: 85km or 55km

Our ride today crosses a trio of major passes en route to the grand valley of Cortina d'Ampezzo. The longer riding option includes the spectacular but gruelling Passo Giau, a Giro d'Italia legend that climbs for 10km at 9%, its summit sitting at a lofty 2236m. Other passes encountered are Passi Valparola and Falzarego, both over 2000m.

Meals: B; D

### Day 10: The Gardens of Trauttmansdorff Castle (non-ride) or Passo di Stelvio: 50km

Today participants have the choice of visiting the most famous tourist attraction of the South Tyrol, or riding Italy's highest and arguably most famous pass, the iconic Passo di Stelvio. The non-ride provides a wonderful opportunity of experiencing what many consider Italy's most beautiful gardens, whilst the Stelvio ride takes riders up, up, and up Italy's highest road, via 48 magnificent switchbacks to its snow covered summit (2757m).

Meals: B; D

### Day 11: Queen of the Dolomites, the Marmolada: 40km

We tackle arguably the most challenging of Dolomiti passes, the fearsome Passo Fedaia. The route winds its way up the Marmolada (highest mountain peak of the Dolomites), reaching its spectacular summit at 2057m. Over lunch riders are privileged to spectacular views of Marmolada Glacier and Lake Fedaia. Riders will have the option of riding Passo Fedaia from either of its sides (Canazei or Caprile). From Canazei it is a long (14km), but relatively comfortable climb. However from Caprile the climb is nothing less than brutal!

Meals: B; D

### Day 12: Transfer to Lake Como – Bellagio

Recognised as Italy's most beautiful lake it was for a time Lance Armstrong's favourite cycling location. We stay in the lake side town of Bellagio. Italians refer to Bellagio as 'the pearl of the lake', it is one of Italy's prettiest places.

Meals: B

### Day 13: Madonna di Ghisallo Ride: 75km or 25km

Today's ride rises high above Bellagio to the tiny cycling sanctuary of Madonna di Ghisallo – patron saint of (Italian) cyclist. A bestowment made by Pope Pious XII in 1949, it adorns the heroic days of Italian cycling with jerseys and bikes from past Italian champions, from Coppi to Pantani. The route continues into the deep green slopes of Lake Como's southern peninsula. These roads feature regularly in the autumn classic race Giro d'Lombardy – widely considered to be the most beautiful of professional one day cycling events.

Meals: B

### Day 14: Lake Como Loop Ride: 65km

For our final ride we partake in a spectacular lakeside ride completed with short (10min) ferry trip across lake. You could say we will be going out in style!!

The route rolls gently to Como at bottom of lake, and then takes us upwards along the western shoreline of lake to Menaggio. Along the way we pass some of Italy's finest and most expensive Villas, as well as absorbing the natural beauty and charm of the lake.

Meals: B

### Day 15: Transfer to Como Station – End of Trip

## BOOKINGS & ENQUIRIES

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