

# Dover to Durness



Whilst most people have heard of the Lands End to John O'Groats tour not many people have heard of the Dover to Durness cycle tour. So what about the opposite two corners? This sensational tour takes in some of the best cycling the British Isles has to offer, including the Kentish Downs; Rutland; the Peak District; The Yorkshire Dales and the unbelievably beautiful islands and coastline of the Western Highlands. Have we whet your appetite? Welcome to the Dover to Durness Tour.

Covering a total of 950 miles / 1520 km (approximately,) this exciting and challenging tour provides another rewarding experience in a similar vein as the Lands End to John O'Groats tour. There is slightly more climbing on the "D2D" but you are rewarded grandly for your efforts as some of the days are unrivalled in the British Isles for their sheer grandeur and beauty.

Per day we average 73 miles / 117 km, which is split over 13 days of fully supported cycling.

## Highlights

- Beautiful lesser-known areas for idyllic cycling
- Experiencing one of Adventure Cycling's most well-kept secrets
- Stunning and serene Scottish Inner Hebrides
- End-to-end cycling of the UK
- The best of British flora and fauna

## What's included?

14 nights' accommodation, 14 breakfasts, 13 lunches

Refreshment stops with our famous red brew vans

Mechanical support including spare bikes and equipment

GPS files and route notes

Full logistical planning and support from the first to the last night including luggage transfers

2 back up vans and a guide cycling at the back of the group

Pick up from station on arrival day (Friday) and transfer to Inverness station and airport at the end of the tour.

Peak Tours cycle shirt and certificate

Lots of fun!



# Itinerary

## Friday: Non-riding day

Arrival day - welcome to the tour!

## Saturday: Day 1 Dover to Thurrock

Distance: 84 miles / 135 km

Elevation: 4800 ft / 1450 m

Begin on the Dover to Folkestone Heritage trail.

Cycle through the Kentish Downs, pass over the Medway near Rochester.

Cross the Thames via the Tilsbury passenger ferry at Gravesend and on towards first night's destination of Brentwood.

## Sunday: Day 2 Thurrock to St Ives

Distance: 85 miles / 137 km

Elevation: 2600 ft / 800 m

Begin on quiet country lanes in Essex and Cambridgeshire.

Afternoon of thatched cottages, winding roads and gentle streams through villages

Cycle through the vibrant city of Cambridge before arriving at St Ives.

## Monday: Day 3 St Ives to Castle Donnington

Distance: 82 miles / 131 km

Elevation: 3500 ft / 1050 m

Cycling on 'The Thicket' route out towards Huntingdon.

Cycle into Rutland—England's smallest county.

Pass the Welland viaduct and reach the tranquil riverside setting at Castle Donnington.

## Tuesday: Day 4 Castle Donnington to Thornsett

Distance: 62 miles / 100km

Elevation: 4200 ft / 1300 m

Shorter day through Nottinghamshire and picture post card villages into the Peak District.

Reach the tip of Derbyshire—close to Peak Tours HQ!

## Wednesday: Day 5 Thornsett to Settle

Distance: 67 miles / 107km

Elevation: 5400 ft / 1650 m

A hillier day skirting the edges of Derbyshire, Greater Manchester and into Yorkshire.

Look for views of Wales on a clear day.

Evening destination in the beautiful market town of Settle.

## Thursday: Day 6 Settle to Penrith

Distance: 61 miles / 99 km

Elevation: 4700 ft / 1450 m

Join part of the Way of the Roses route through distinctive limestone hills and quiet country roads.

Sublime scenery through the Yorkshire Dales and into the lesser known, but no less beautiful area of The Howgills in the



# Itinerary

## Friday: Day 7 Penrith to Sanquar

Distance: 91 miles / 146 km  
Elevation: 3500 ft / 11100m

Cross the Scottish border passing through Gretna and Annan. Enjoy some long flat sections in the afternoon, before joining undulating countryside roads in Dumfries.

Pass the impressive Drumlanrig Castle and on to our first night's destination of sleepy Sanquhar.

## Saturday: Day 8 Sanquar to Brodick (Arran)

Distance: 51 miles / 83 km  
Elevation: 2200 ft / 700m

Pedal through the Ayrshire countryside by gentle rivers and take the ferry over to Arran from Ardrossan.

Experience the rugged, wild and untamed beauty of the west coast of Scotland.

## Sunday: Day 9 Brodick (Arran) to Oban

Distance: 75 miles / 120 km  
Elevation: 4700 ft / 1400m

Take the superb coastal route towards to Sannox Bay before cutting inland to the north coast of Arran.

Catch the ferry over to Kintyre and continue up to the vibrant town Oban—seaside capital of Scotland!

## Monday: Day 10 Oban to Mallaig

Distance: 75 miles / 120 km  
Elevation: 6000 ft / 1800m

Begin with an early ferry on to Mull and cycle across the island before the second ferry back over to the mainland.



Enjoy spectacular Scottish scenery heading up to the coastal town of Mallaig.

## Tuesday: Day 11 Mallaig to Kinlochewe

Distance: 76 miles / 122 km  
Elevation: 5500 ft / 1700 m

Another superb day takes us across Skye then back on to mainland over the impressive bridge at the Kyle of Lochalsh.

Take on the optional but well-worth detour to the picture postcard village of Plockton before reaching accommodation in and around Kinlochewe.

## Wednesday: Day 12 Kinlochewe to Ullapool

Distance: 75 miles / 120 km  
Elevation: 5200 ft / 1600m

Continue past the impressive mountains around Beinn Eighe and Kinlochewe.

Cycle along the banks of stunning lochs on the way to charming and idyllic Ullapool.

## Thursday: Day 13 Ullapool to Durness

Distance: 68 miles / 109 km  
Elevation: 5000 ft / 1500m

Hug the coastline and take in stunning views from the shores of Loch Assynt.

Head across the Kylescu Bridge on to the tip of the Kyle of Durness.

Roll into Durness where well deserved celebrations await with the tour group meal.

## Friday: Departure Day

Hurrah! - you've completed the Dover to Durness tour. See 'End of the Tour' section on the next page for return logistics.



# Tour Logistics

## The start of the tour

The tour starts in Dover and finishes in Durness.

The guides will meet you at the welcome meal at approximately 7.30pm for an introduction.

There are a few options for arriving into the town:

**Train:** There are frequent trains from London to Dover Priory and the journey takes between 1 to 2 hours depending on the time you are travelling and the station you are travelling from.

**Plane:** you may choose to fly to Heathrow, Gatwick or other airports. You can then make your way down to Dover via public transport or a taxi.

**Ferry:** those travelling from Europe, there are ferries which arrive into Dover. We can collect you from your ferry if you let us know your time of arrival.

**Car:** If you are using a hire car there are plenty of car hire companies who have a depot at Dover. Just let us know when you want picking up and we can collect you once you have dropped off the car.

**Bike:** You may choose to cycle to Dover!

## The end of the tour

The tour ends on Thursday where we will stay for the final meal in Durness. The following morning, a coach takes us to Inverness where you will then be dropped at either the airport or the train station for your onward travel. We aim to get to the train station at around 09:30 and the airport at around 10:00.

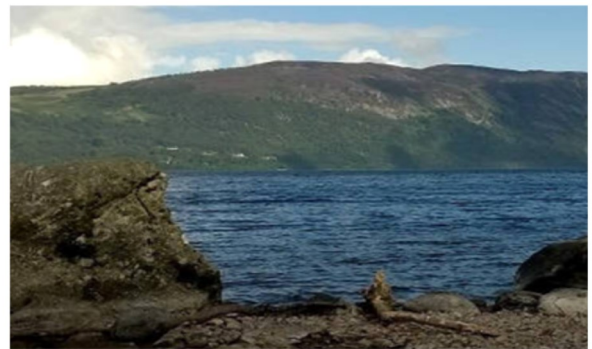
If you are taking your bike back with you then we will transport your bike to Inverness for you or we can take it back to our HQ in Glosop for you to collect at a later date.

If you choose the 'return transport' option then your bikes will be packed & couriered back to your address for you.

## Support

Usually each tour has 3 guides:

- One driving the 'brew van' - each day will usually have a morning and afternoon 'brew stop,' with a table full of snacks and drinks. You will also bring a small bag/rucksack to the morning brief and leave this in the 'brew van' which can be accessed throughout the day.
- One driving the 'luggage / lunch van' - transporting your luggage from hotel to hotel, as well as setting up your lunches.
- One riding at the back of the group - you will have detailed route notes so that you can go slower or faster than the leader if you prefer or you can cycle with the tour guide at the back so that you don't have to navigate at all.
- Mechanical support: we carry a range of spare parts so that repairs can be made en route and we also have spare bikes available in the event that your bike has a serious breakdown. If we can't fix your bike then we will get it to the nearest bike shop.
- Each guide will be contactable by phone during the day so if you have any issues you can get straight in touch with them.
- For smaller groups you might only have one guide that cycles with the group and one back up driver or for groups of 12 or less just one tour leader will provide back-up for you.



*"This was a tough ride and a personal challenge, as all great endeavours should be, but the inspiring views, the rapid descents, the banter and the outstanding organisation made for a hugely pleasurable experience" Dave*

## What's Included?

- 14 nights' accommodation, 14 breakfasts, 13 lunches
- Refreshments from the brew van
- Mechanical support including spare bikes should these be needed
- GPS files and route notes
- Full logistical planning and support from the first to the last night including luggage transfers
- 2 back up vans
- A guide cycling at the back of the group each day
- Pick up from the station on arrival day (Friday)
- A Peak Tours cycle shirt and certificate
- Bike transfer between Peak Tours HQ and the start/end (Optional)
- Lots of fun!

## Food

### Breakfast

Breakfast is included in the cost of the tour, and will vary slightly between the various hotels and B&Bs that we use, but you can usually expect have a choice of some cooked breakfast options, as well as toast, cereals, fruit juices, tea, coffee etc.

### Lunch

Lunches will be provided each day and will generally be a buffet at a cafe or a country pub.

### Evening meals

Evening meals can be bought at your accommodation or in a nearby pub, café or restaurant. On the first and final evenings of the tour we will have a group meal at the hotel.

### Dietary requirements

Please let us know of any dietary requirements you have and we will ensure that all lunch stops and places we eat evening meals are informed.

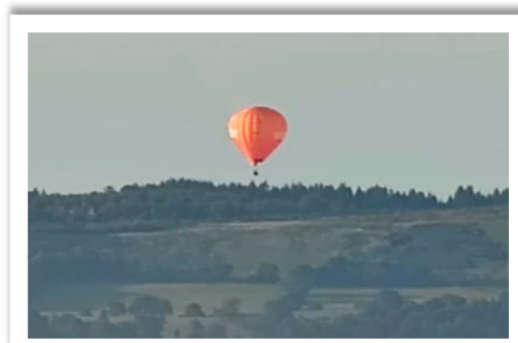
There will also be snacks on the 'brew van' to suit any and all dietary needs!

## Accommodation

You have a choice sharing a double or a twin room. If you would like your own space then you can choose the single room option, or sole occupancy of a double. Most of the rooms are en-suite however there maybe a few nights where your room isn't en-suite (Sole occupancy of a double room or double is guaranteed en-suite). Generally on the Dover to Durness tour we stay in hotels, pubs or smaller bed and breakfasts.

## What's not included?

- Evening meals / dinner
- Drinks at lunchtime
- Transport to Dover/Back from Inverness
- Insurance
- Cycle hire (available for a fee)
- Garmin hire (available for a fee)
- Bike transfer between Peak Tours HQ and you (available for a fee)



## Kit list

Clothing for all weathers is recommended so waterproofs are essential.

A full recommended kit list is provided and we are always happy to answer any questions that you may have. You can see details of a kit list [here](#).

Luggage is restricted to a maximum of 18kg per person—we have to look after our guides and their backs as they will be carrying your luggage in and out of the hotels!

## Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out adequate insurance for your tour which, as an absolute minimum should provide cover for your bike and belongings and cancellation cover in the event that you have to cancel your tour for unforeseen circumstances.

You should be aware that if you have an accident or fall ill while on the tour you will lose the money paid for the trip. A travel insurance policy would allow you to reclaim most of the money as well as providing insurance in case you lose your bags or if your bike is stolen, broken etc.

Your policy should also cover cancellation costs if you cancel the tour within 8 weeks of departure. If this happens we will try to fill your space and return your funds to you but if we are unable to fill your place you will lose the funds paid for the tour.

We have partnered with Yellow Jersey who provide Travel and Cycle insurance for UK residents. You can find further details [here](#).

# Am I fit enough?

## Difficulty

The Dover to Durness route covers the opposite corners of the UK from LEJOG. Both routes cover similar distances and are memorable achievements.

This tour is classed as a grade 8 tour. See details of difficulty rating [here](#).

They should not be underestimated and on the Dover to Durness tour, you will be expected to be able to complete an average of 72 miles / 116 km per day.

Most people on the tour will be active cyclists, and cycling the above distances on consecutive days will not be too challenging for them.

## How fast do I need to be?

Generally, most cyclists completing this tour will be capable of cycling at 10-12 miles / 16-19 kmph over the whole day, keeping in mind that some days are hillier than others, and you will be stopping for breaks and lunches.

Most days start at 8:30 and we ask that all riders are finished by 19:00 at the latest if possible to allow you time to relax and explore the culture of the places that you stay in the evenings.

## Are there any hills on the tour?

The route is varied with both flat and undulating routes together with some challenging climbs through the Peaks, Dales and in Scotland.

## Training

The fitter you are and the more training that you do beforehand will add to the enjoyment of your tour and improve your chances of succeeding the challenge.

If you need any advice about fitness please contact us and we will be happy to discuss any questions and concerns that you may have.

We have a training document which has a suggested training programme, which you can access [here](#).

## Bikes

The Dover to Durness tour can be completed by people on all types of bikes: it is important you ride on a bike on which you are most comfortable. Most people choose to ride on road or touring bikes for this tour.

You can transport your bike in the following ways:

- bring your own - most people using this option will arrive by train.
- we can transport your bike for you if you can get your bike to us in Glossop in the Peak District

Please ensure that your bike is fully serviced and in good working order before the start of the trip. It is advisable to have your bike serviced a few weeks before the start of the tour. This will allow time to 'bed in' before you start your ride.

Alternatively you can hire a bike from us, please see our website for more information.

