



Southern Upland Coast to Coast

Summary

This is an epic trip across one of the widest and wildest parts of Scotland, following every type of trail imaginable. We link up some of Southern Scotland's finest trail centres with an unsurpassed wild route. The scenery is more akin to what you would find in the Highlands and the riding is superb on this classic journey.

Highlights

World-class trails at Kirroughtree
Twisty singletrack in Ae forest
Stunning scenery through the Moffat Hills
The wild and exposed Lammermuir Hills
The pies in Melrose!

Itinerary

Day 1. You Arrive in Scotland. We can help you with transport to Portpatrick, get the bikes organised, maybe take the chance to have a blast on some local trails and talk through the trip. We stay overnight in the heart of South West Scotland.

Day 2. Weaving along an interesting coastline we pass old lighthouses and cliff tops before heading inland across open moors where the smugglers and covenanters used to roam, passing bothies and ancient caves. The riding gets pretty challenging as the Galloway hills draw ever closer. A long downhill takes us to the market town of Newton Stewart for our overnight stop in the 'Gateway to the Galloway Hills'.

Day 3. Straight away, we head off-road through the UK's largest forest park. This is a jewel in the crown of the world famous 7 Stanes mountain bike network with sweeping berms, challenging climbs and thrilling single-track. A back road section leads us up the Ken valley before a roller-coaster of a route to Thornhill (invented here by Kirkpatrick MacMillan in 1839).

Day 4. Leaving Thornhill, we take to some of Scotland's finest natural feeling single-track at Drumlanrig Forest. Rocks, roots, thrilling down-hills and beautiful forest scenery make this a not to be missed section of the trip. Before we have time to catch our breath we head east through the remote Lowther hills to take on some man-made trails through Ae Forest with its big berms and rugged tracks. One last up and over takes us to the pretty town of Moffat.

Day 5. We start the day with a challenging climb into the Moffat Hills with arguably one of the biggest views in Scotland. Our reward for the climb is a view down Moffat Dale and a stunning descent into the Ettrick Valley - one of the main tributaries for Scotland's most famous salmon river. Then there are two challenging up and overs taking us over exposed hill country but rewarding us with some awesome descents before reaching Peebles.

Day 6. Today we climb our way east over open hillsides and forest on the intimidating Minch Moor in Traquair Forest. We tackle the testing trails and summit the Three Brethren before a rapid descent to Melrose. We refuel on those pies in Melrose before some great trails lead us up to our night's destination at Lauder.

Day 7. With the biggest hills behind us we can almost smell the North Sea as we head over the windswept and desolate Lammermuir Hills just south of Edinburgh. Fantastic scenery, awesome trails and the knowledge that we are about to complete an amazing achievement will keep us going to reach the seaside town of Dunbar and its picturesque harbour that represents the end of our epic journey.

Duration:

7 nights' accommodation
6 days' adventurous cycling

Average Daily Distance:

65 km or 40 miles

Includes:

- 7 nights' accommodation
- Baggage transfers
- SMLA qualified expert guide or comprehensive maps and directions
- Vehicle back up
- Transfers and transport

Available on request:

- Pick up and drop off from public transport links
- Bike and Kit Hire

Grade:

Fitness Grading: 4
Technical Grading: **Red**

Price:

From £480 per person

Please contact us with your trip specifications for an accurate price.

Dates:

Guided or self-guided trips are available between March and October for groups of 2 or more. Contact us with the dates you have in mind.

If you are travelling individually please contact us to find out about available dates.



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Accommodation and food

We have researched the best bike friendly accommodation providers who we know give a good quality service. They provide everything you need after a long day in the saddle including secure bike storage, drying facilities, hot showers, and hearty food. On this trip the accommodation provides a fantastic chance to relax and reflect on the amazing wilderness you are travelling through. **Luxury** accommodation is in a hotel of your choice from one of the many top class hotels available throughout the trip. **B & B** accommodation in biker friendly B&B's or small Inns is on a bed and breakfast basis. **Bunkhouse** accommodation is in bunkhouses or hostels and is on a self catering basis. Wherever you stay there will be access to shops, restaurants, pubs and hotels.

Climate, weather and midges!

The west coast of Scotland is generally mild in the summer months but can sometimes be wet. Conditions also can and do change quickly, especially on higher and more exposed areas, so light waterproofs are advisable. We cycle from West to East which hopefully should mean the prevailing conditions will be behind us.

The trails

There is almost every type of trail imaginable on this trip, from purpose built cycle paths to old drove roads, forestry trails, and superb single-track. The surfaces are all generally hard packed or rocky trails but with some softer areas of grass and moorland. Some parts are technically challenging so some off-road experience will be required.

Guided trips

Our guided trips are designed to give you a hassle free way to enjoy the amazing biking in Scotland. We include a qualified SMBLA guide who can help with aspects of your riding and take you on the best trails including hidden trail sections. As well as navigating for you, our guides also carry sufficient spares and tools to help you keep rolling in the event of a mechanical problem. First aid trained, they will also make sure you are well looked after on the trails.

Self guided trips

Experience the same great trails and accommodation as on the guided trips but without the support and knowledge of a guide. We will still do all of the organising for you and you'll be provided with comprehensive trail maps, advice, transport, baggage transfers and a full itinerary. There will always be someone on the end of the phone in case of emergencies too.

Vehicle support

Whether you go guided or self guided there will be a back up vehicle available to carry your baggage. Plus if you have any mechanical problems you can get assistance or if you just need to take it easy for a section, the vehicle will be there to help.

Bike hire

We work with local bike shops to provide you with the latest bikes for hire. There are a full range of bikes from standard hard-tails to flashy full-sussers! If you need to hire a bike, please let us know at the time of booking and we can make sure to get the right bike for you. If bringing your own bike, it is a good idea to check how you will get it to the start point, especially if travelling by public transport.

Transport and baggage transfers

We transport your bags between each night's accommodation leaving you free to carry a small day-pack with some spare clothes, food and drink. We can also help as much as possible with transfers to and from the airport/train/bus station at the start and the end of the journey. Again just give us as much notice as possible.

Clothing and kit

Dress for the weather in Scotland! You can check out the kit list on the website or contact us for more detailed advice if you are not sure what to bring. There can literally be 4 seasons in a day so come prepared for all conditions.