



GLOBALADVENTUREGUIDE

USA Mountain Biking 13 Days

“The Wicked Wicked Wild Wild West Tour”

If you want the ride of your life, day after day in brilliant sunshine and on some of the best trails in the World - look no further. The mountain biking here is incredible, with so much variety and amid such dramatic scenery that it will definitely take your breath away.

This 13 day tour out of San Francisco is for cross country riders who love singletrack, but also like to mix it up with other terrain across a real variety of destinations. With a support vehicle to help us explore, we spend a few days in each place, sampling the greatest trails and the best West Coast hospitality. On the list are Marin County, birthplace of the MTB, Lake Tahoe with its famous Rim Trail and Mr Toad's Wild Ride, Mammoth Mountain (that downhill Mecca) and last but by no means least - Santa Cruz. We even take a day off mid-way to explore the magic of Yosemite National Park.

This tour is graded as a 3 (Challenging) but includes some Grade 4 (Extreme) sections. There is plenty of riding at altitude around Tahoe to test your fitness and technical descents to test your skills in the arena. Not for the faint hearted this tour rewards your efforts highly on the fun-o-meter!

Arrival (day 1)

Arrive in San Francisco and on arrival take a shuttle bus to our downtown hotel. Here you can settle into your room, meet up with the rest of the group, and perhaps build up your bike before heading out to one of the many great places to eat nearby.

No Riding. Driving Time: 20mins from airport



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New Zealand
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Golden Gate Headlands (day 2)

After a good American breakfast we ride straight from the door of our hotel, chasing the cable cars over Nob Hill and down Hyde Street to the Wharf. Here we hit the bike trail along the waterfront, shared with other riders, walkers, joggers and in-line skaters (all with perfect tans and the coolest outfits, as you'd expect in California!)

Soon we're out on the famous Golden Gate Bridge, cruising along the bike path towards the rising hills of the Golden Gate Headlands where our real off-road riding begins. There are many trails to explore here but our favourite route takes us on a wide loop, using Diaz Ridge with its superb descent to the Ocean at Muir Beach, followed by the Miwok and Coastal trails which bring us out at a fabulous viewpoint across the bay. It's a full day out, with a great mix of riding, finishing up at the ferry port in Sausalito for the journey across the Bay back to our downtown hotel.

Riding time: All day ride. **Driving Time:** No transfer



Mr Toad's Wild Ride (day 3)

Remember when Mr Toad (from Wind in the Willows) bought his motor car? He sped, swerved, bumped and bowled along, having the ride of his life, with a reckless disregard for anyone or anything in his path - he was just having too much fun. That's exactly what this first ride in The Sierra Mountains does for anyone who lays a tyre on it, which is why the Tahoe locals call it "Mr Toad's Wild Ride."

Leaving San Francisco in our air-con support van we drive across country and into the mountains, unloading riders and bikes at a trailhead just south of Lake Tahoe. The ride starts with a twisting single track climb, but we've taken the worst of it out with the bus transfer.

It's not long before you're dropping your saddle and psyching yourself up for a ride which combines the best of every descent you've ever ridden. Smooth single track, steeply bermed corners, steps, drops and technical rocky sections, all mixed together and lasting for almost 2 hours. Strong riders should be able to complete it all, weaker riders may walk a few sections, but everyone will end the day in a state of enjoyment and awe, like Mr Toad ... "beep - beep."

Riding time: 3 hours. **Driving Time:** 4.5 Hours in the afternoon

Mount Rose to Hidden Beach (day 4)

After a night at our lovely little hotel in South Tahoe we drive up to Mount Rose summit pass, ready to ride all day on some perfect single-track. This is the legendary Tahoe Rim Trail, famed for its seemingly endless, flowing singletrack, mixed with short technical sections. You will meet met riders from Moab, Durango

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and other classic resorts, all coming to Tahoe to experience the magic of these trails.

By starting the day high and ending at Hidden Beach on the shores of Lake Tahoe, you'll get to enjoy more than your fair share of great descents. Just remember to take in the scenery too - from the ancient forests to the sage scrub high above Marlette Lake, you'll be riding in beautiful surroundings and almost certainly in glorious sunshine too!

Evenings in South Tahoe are varied and flexible. After your day on the bike you can do your own thing, join the group for dinner at the local brew pub or maybe have a big barbeque on the deck of our guesthouse. It's a sociable as you want it to be, which makes for a fun and relaxing time for everyone. There's even casino's across the Nevada border, just 500m from where we're staying.

Riding Time: All day ride **Driving Time:** 40mins in the am 20mins in the pm



The High Rim Trail (day 5)

Now that you're acclimatised to the elevation we can take you on a final, epic Tahoe ride. We pick up the Rim Trail again, after a short transfer up to the trailhead, this time ready for one of the highest and most stunning sections of all. You'll be twisting up single track to almost 10,000 feet, past crystal clear mountain lakes, through forests where deer roam, and best of all, the descents will continue to knock you out. Depending on the fitness levels of the group, the ride can end with a number of different descents. If you're keen, fit and up for an early start, it's possible to make it all the way to the top of Mr Toad's for another run of this breathtaking trail.

Riding Time: All day ride **Driving Time:** 20mins

Rock Creek Singletrack (day 6)

By now your legs should feel well worked out and you'll be ready for a morning relaxing in the van, as we drive southwards through deserts and mountains to the resort town of Mammoth. We check into our comfortable hotel by midday and give you three choices for the afternoon – to relax by the pool and explore at your leisure, to get dropped at the sweeping single-track of the Downtown Trail, or to head for the more technical riding of Lower Rock Creek. The latter is our guided option, and takes the form of a one-way single track descent trail through amazing rock formations, lined with silver Aspens and giant Jefferson Pines. It's a great introduction to the, narrow, twisting, loose surfaced trails of the area, which make fat-tired riding such a blast!

Riding Time: 2 hrs **Driving Time:** 4 hours in the am

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Mammoth Mountain (day 7)

Today we spend the whole day riding downhill on Mammoth Mountain. After picking up a lift pass we jump into the cable car for a ride up to the 11,000 foot summit of this famous mountain biking mountain. There are so many trails to choose from that every level and type of rider will be satisfied. Steep, rough and twisting trails drop off the front face of the mountain, while easier routes provide flowing single-track off the back, beneath the Minaret Summits. As you descend the choices increase, with everything from easy warm-up runs to world class downhill.

By the time you head for the Downtown trail you can easily rack up over 40 miles of descending – that's a big day of riding, and you'll be ready for a big Saturday night out to unwind. There are some great restaurants, brewery pubs and bars here, all within easy walking distance of our hotel.

Riding Time: All day Ride **Driving Time:** No driving today



Yosemite National Park (day 8)

As you enjoy a big breakfast, your bikes and bags get loaded up once again, this time for the drive across to Yosemite National Park. Coming in across Tuolumne Meadows you'll get stunning views of the upper Yosemite Valley and Half Dome. We then drive around and down into the valley, for a hike up to Nevada and Vernal Waterfalls. This is a refreshing change of pace from the biking, as you walk up to this great viewpoint, where you can enjoy your lunch and even swim in the clear pools.

Once you're down from the hike there may be time to visit the Ansel Adams gallery before we drive out of the park and head for our overnight stop in Merced.

No Riding Today. Driving Time: 3 hours in the am and 2 hours in the pm

The Santa Cruz Mountains (day 9)

This morning we finish the drive westwards, heading for the Santa Cruz Mountains, which overlook the Pacific Coast. Here we ride in the protected forests above Nisene Marks State Park, an area of outstanding beauty, and even more outstanding biking! Whether you're a lover of fine single-track or just enjoy the amazing vistas of mountains, young redwood forests and the Monterey Bay beyond, you are sure to have a great day.

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Santa Cruz is also a place to enjoy a great night out. Once we're settled into our hotel close to the beach, we can wander into this thriving town to experience the nightlife. There are many places to eat and drink, and plenty of curious looking locals to watch as you sit out in the pavement cafes. If we finish the ride in time there are also some great bike shops – ideal for discount souvenir shopping!

Riding Time: 3 hours. **Driving Time:** 3 hours

Riding the Magic Carpet (day 10)

Today we ride out from the door on a true Santa Cruz epic. Cruising along the waterfront cycle lane we head towards Wilder Ranch State Park, where the off-roading begins. Soon we're on twisting single-track, looking back at the ocean, then up towards the forests where the famous Magic Carpet ride begins. This route is one of many that the locals have built into the forests, a real treat of flowing trail riding, with some great bumps, jumps, roots and chutes to spice things up along the way. The trail brings us into an area of Giant Redwoods, which we can ride through on our way to the riverside beach where we have our lunch (after a "socks off" river crossing!)

The next part of our epic brings us to the top of Wilder Ranch, ready for the descent back to the coast. There are many trails to choose from here, whether you want to cruise down wide fire roads or savor the narrow, fast and furious trail cut by the local riders. There are extra options too, depending on how strong you are feeling, but eventually we all hit the Oceanside trail back to our hotel.

Riding time: All day ride. **Driving Time:** No driving today



Mount Tamalpais and Marin County (day 11)

A short drive from Santa Cruz brings us back to San Francisco, then over the bridge to Mount Tamalpais. This is Marin County's highest and most famous peak - a spiritual focus for the Miwok Indians and a site almost as sacred to local mountain bikers. It's a steady ride to the summit on the Old Railroad Grade, and from the top you get an awe inspiring 360 degree panoramic view - the city and the bay, the Pacific Ocean and the hills of Marin all stretching out before you.

Dropping off the top we ride down Eldridge Grade and along to Rocky Ridge, following some of the best, classic routes that Marin has to offer. Eventually we come down to sea level at the Larkspur ferry terminal, but with plenty of ferries to choose

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from we can end the day with a few drinks under the sun at the Marin Brewing Company bar and restaurant first. This is a great place to finish the riding on your holiday - with walls covered in mountain bike memorabilia, signed posters and jerseys from the stars, and some classic old bikes hanging from the ceiling. Eventually it's time to jump on our ferry to the city for the short pedal back to our central hotel.

Riding Time: All day ride. **Driving Time:** 2 hours in the am

Exploring San Francisco (day 12)

Today you are free to explore San Francisco however you wish. With its excellent network of cable-cars and busses, you'll be able to travel around the city with ease. Take a spin around the colourful areas of Chinatown, Haight-Ashbury, the Spanish Mission district, the Italian cafes at North Beach, or the lively streets of the Castro. If you'd prefer to head for the hills, ride through the Presidio to explore more of the great Marin Headlands trails and scenery, or take a ferry to ride the singletrack at China Beach State Park. Whatever you choose to do, we'll get together in the evening for a last big night out.

Riding Time: multiple options available

Departure Day (days 13)

You will usually have one last morning to see San Francisco, depending on your flight times. Then we pack up the bikes ready to transfer out to the airport, for the overnight flight home.

Included:

12 nights accommodation
All breakfasts
Tour Support vehicle and driver
Guide
Plenty of singletrail

Excluded:

International flights
Visas – if required
Bike rental
Travel insurance
Yosemite entrance fee (approx US\$15)
Mammoth Downhill park fees (approx US\$30)
Ferry fees (approx 2 x US\$8)
Tips

Grade:

This tour is graded 3 Challenging (on a scale of 1-4, with 4 being Extreme).

For the latest pricing and departure dates, please visit our website
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