



Lake Geneva Challenge 2016

A Feast of Great Scenery and Quiet Country Roads each day

We are two Extra Mile organisers, Rob Oakley (cyclist Team #1) and Preston Ayres (chief marshal) and have just returned from our recce trip of the route, hotels and food for this year's challenge. Here is our report.

Overall impression – Although we have previously visited the Vosges, the Black Forest and Switzerland, we both believe that the scenery this year is the most spectacular of all 14 Extra Mile Challenges. It is fantastic with a lot to impress each day. We have many long, beautiful downhill runs so before departure, ensure a full service of wheels, brakes and brake cables. As an indication of how good the roads are, on our recce we saw many local motor cyclists enjoying the ride in the sun.



View across the Rhine from the Vosges

Thursday – Driving time from the Channel Tunnel to Nancy is 4 ½ - 5 hours and our tunnel crossings are booked for between 10.20 and 11.50. Thursday night we all stay in the Novotel (used by us a few times before) and all eat together followed by our important information and safety briefing. On Friday morning, we leave Nancy via a quiet route to the west rather than the busy south road.

F is for Friday – a fantastic day – French farmland/forests/fishing lakes/even foxes, we saw two on the recce. Our first 95 miles are undulating roads



A Valley viewed from Route des Crêtes

between 700' and 1,500'. As we arrive at the Vosges we have a number of climbs taking us to 4,000' and these reward us with amazing scenery. On Michelin maps three stars are given to the most picturesque villages. We travel the entire length of the Route des Crêtes (awarded three stars on its entire length of 30 miles),

which is undulating but at around 4,000' and has breath-taking views to both sides – a mega road finishing with a number of hairpin bends on a long descent into Mulhouse. In Mulhouse we are split evenly between the Novotel and

Golden Tulip hotels for two nights. On each night we eat in our “own” hotel and we will provide our all-important briefing at both hotels after dinner.

Saturday – We start Saturday with a pleasant workout across the Rhine valley



We cross the Rhine

and into Germany with plenty of time to look ahead at the hills of the Black Forest! On all days we have avoided the steepest of the climbs in the area but at 25 miles the road starts a gentle climb, soon to be rather less gentle as we rise to 3,400'. We anticipate that our longest climb of the challenge (10 miles gradually increasing to

5% and then another 6 miles rather steeper) will require a number of planned rider changes before the summit. From here we get our first views of the snow-clad Alps, many green valleys much closer and a few million trees! The road surfaces in Germany – and Switzerland on day 3 – are excellent.



The Black Forest from Wiedener

Sunday – We head south from Mulhouse (at 700') along many “green” (Michelin classification) roads past attractive very colourful Swiss houses in an obviously affluent region. At 45 miles we have successfully tackled probably our toughest climb of the challenge, 3 miles of which much is 10/11%, and by



Entering Switzerland

90 miles we are at 3,800'. We never had to show our passports at border controls (how long will Schengen last!). For miles we run alongside a narrow gauge railway along a beautiful plain (the Grand Tour) on the edge of the Jura. At 95 miles we

start the drop down to the banks of Lake Neuchatel and cycle alongside the lake for 15 miles. There remain a couple more “lumpy bits” before our final breath-taking descent through historic vineyards to Lake Geneva with views of the snow-capped mountains beyond. Our two hotels in Montreux are the Eurotel and Eden Palace, the latter next door to the venue of our Gala Dinner. We have arranged gala dinners in a palace, on a boat, in the Hospices de

Beaune, in a cave but this is our first in the grand ambience of a Casino! This could make your whole trip very cheap, or alternatively.....? A fitting climax to the celebration of having completed the Tri-Nation Lake Geneva Challenge.

Monday – This is a fairly long drive back but the previous three days will have made it so worthwhile. Allow 7-8 hours driving time back to the Channel Tunnel. Our return Tunnel bookings are around 18.30 to 19.30.

The Routes and other Statistics

Don't just take our word for it, check out the detailed routes at these links:

Day 1 173.2 miles 12,165' elevations

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/13949144>

Day 2 169.5 miles 11,767' elevations

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/13952342>

Day 3 155.6 miles 12,412' elevations

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/13953402>

Zoom in for detail and run cursor on route for detail at that point. Hit the three bars (near bottom left) for full page elevations and gradients. Note that the odd gradient spike can be just the inside of a hairpin.

If you have already entered – you can anticipate this feast over the summer!

If you have not yet entered, complete the entry form on our home page <http://www.extra-mile.org.uk/> to take up one of the handful of team spaces still available.

Happy cycling

Rob & Preston

We sign off with two pictures of our destination, Montreux.

