

INTRODUCTION TO BIKE-PACKING, 7 to 8 October 2017

INTRODUCTION

Experience the freedom of wild camping in the hills with your bike. If you fancy bike-packing but haven't got the equipment, knowledge or confidence to try it alone, this is the weekend for you.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Getting organised for a bike-packing trip is complicated. These notes will tell you what to expect from the trip and what to bring with you. If there's anything else you need to know, or want to check, please ask!

ITINERARY

This is totally dependent upon the weather, trail conditions, strength of the group and what you want out of the trip. It could alter considerably.

Saturday 7 October

We'll meet at the Elan Valley Visitor Centre and take an hour or so to discuss the plan for the weekend over coffee. We'll talk through the kit and the various situations we'll find ourselves in during the 2 days. When everyone's happy, we'll load the bikes and head into the mountains – loading the bikes can take some time!

We usually make camp early evening, when we'll discuss bike-packing and general wild camping etiquette in more detail. We'll cook our dinner, learning the do's and don'ts of cooking on a small stove (don't worry, there's always plenty of food, no matter how big your appetite) and then we'll more than likely hit the hay early.

Sunday 8 October

We'll make breakfast – again juggling with those little stoves - before breaking camp and loading the bikes again. Then we'll enjoy another day out in the hills!

INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL TRIP PRICE

- 2 full day's guided riding and a night beneath the stars - maximum client to guide ratio 4-1
- All bike-packing kit including top quality Wildcat bike-packing equipment, dry bags, lightweight sleeping bags and mats, stoves, food, head torches and tents (if you've got your own kit and would rather use that, then do)
- Any required instruction and guidance on all aspects of bike-packing including equipment, techniques, wild camping etiquette, environmental practices, dangers and decision making, the law, nutrition, hydration and sanitation

NOT INCLUDED IN THE ORIGINAL TRIP PRICE

- Getting to and from the meeting place
- Travel insurance and personal equipment

Is this weekend for me?

The riding will be adventurous rather than full-on tough and technical. But we'll cover some decent miles at a steady pace and we'll certainly knock up some ascents and descents. Stamina is the main thing and you'll want to be comfortable being in the saddle and actually moving for at least 5 hours a day. Both days can take as much as 7 hours to complete. A sense of humour is required for carrying a fully loaded bike over a bog or river.

No previous camping or sleeping-wild experience is needed, but please be prepared to get stuck in and help us put up tents, cook and wash up. We'll be pretty isolated, and a long way from any facilities, so to keep weight to a minimum we usually sleep with 2 people to a lightweight expedition tent.

If you have any concerns about your ability or fitness or suitability, please get in touch.

BIKES

Most mountain bikes are suitable for bike-packing. Fat bikes are great, but fairly specialised so unless you're already committed to bike-packing, you're unlikely to have one. A good hard tail is probably the best compromise, although full suspension is fine too. Please note that dropper posts may not work with a seat pack.

INSURANCE

UK residents don't need medical insurance in the UK, but we strongly recommend travel insurance to cover you if you get injured or fall ill before the trip or during it.

KIT LIST

Suggested riding kit for mountain days.

Some items can be shared between the group – please let me know if there's anything you haven't got at the briefing on Saturday morning.

A hydration pack big enough to carry the list below – suggested size is 20L.

- Water and snacks – gels, energy bars, flapjacks, jelly babies
- Lunch (this will be provided)
- Mini pump for your valve type
- 2 spare inner tubes
- Tyre patches (preferably self-adhesive)
- Tyre levers
- Multi-tool
- 1 set of spare brake pads
- Rear gear hanger for your bike – essential
- Cable ties
- Duct tape (we suggest wrapping 1m around your pump)
- Power link (for your chain type and speed)
- Mobile phone – in a waterproof case

- Small personal first aid kit
- Any medication you need
- Dry bag to keep spare clothing dry

Clothing

- Helmet
- Cycling shorts and/or waterproof shorts (or trousers)
- Wicking base layer or jersey
- Mid layer (fleece or soft shell)
- Windproof top
- Waterproof jacket
- Riding glasses
- Gloves (worth having a spare pair)
- Waterproof socks
- Cycling shoes (you must be able to walk in them!)

Spare clothing for camp

- Insulated jacket
- Woolly hat
- Spare base layer
- Fleece tights