



Bike Odyssey

HANNIBAL

2338 km
1,461 mi

28,701 m
94,163 ft

28 Nights
29 Days

Barcelona to Rome

Exceptional. Cycling. Adventures.



Bike Odyssey

THE WORLD'S BEST CYCLING ADVENTURES

Join us on a ride of epic proportions in the footsteps of Hannibal, one of history's greatest military commanders. From Barcelona to Rome, cycle on some of Europe's most picturesque bike routes through Spain, France and Italy. Traverse iconic and infamous climbs of the Grand Tours, roll through the vineyards of the Languedoc, Provence, Piedmont and Tuscany and sample the delights of the diverse gastronomy to be found along this route.

Learn from the saddle about this ancient clash of superpowers - If Hannibal had been victorious over Rome our world today would be vastly different. The Western world wouldn't have Rome at its origins, rather a Middle Eastern colony based in North Africa!

Conceptualised by Australian Sam Wood a Roman archaeologist, BBC documentary and bike tour operator, Sam has run this tour for the last five years. Take a look at ['On Hannibal's Trail'](#) to see the documentary inspiration for this ride.



WHY BIKE ODYSSEY ?

We don't run typical bike tours, we run epic cycling adventures. Our trips are always across continents and through multiple countries. This challenge and the accomplishment which it brings is central to our tours.

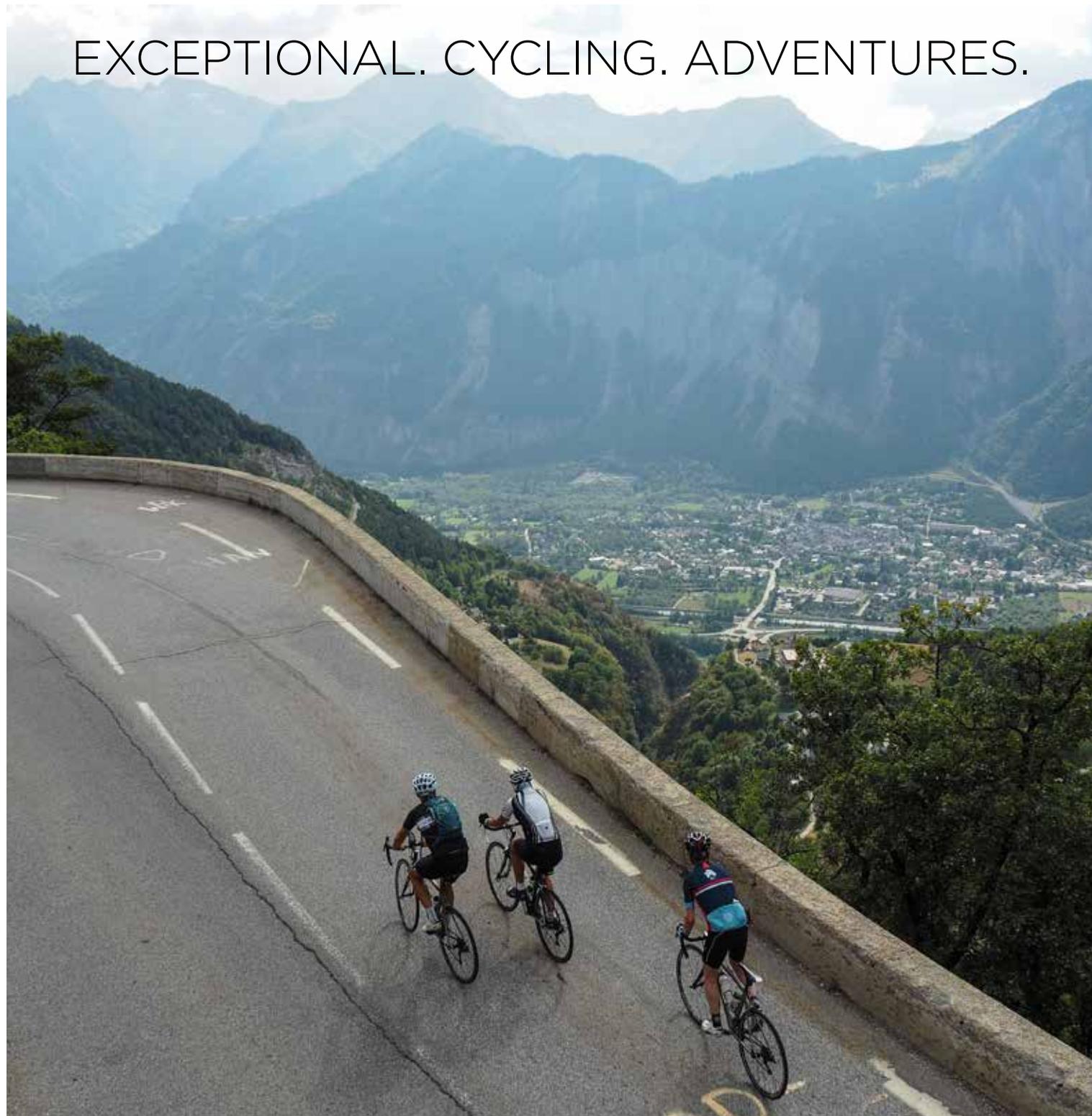
Our journeys are chosen by history. Whether this be riding in the footsteps of a famous (or infamous) figure or tracing the history of a region or period, this context brings genuine atmosphere and purpose to our trips.

As for the more 'usual' aspects of the trip. We always ride the road less traveled, the places we stay are unique and the food and drink we consume is chosen with care and enthusiasm to be local and exceptional. Along with this we provide a level of expertise, practicality and comfort that no other cycling company matches. From our specialist guides to our team soigneur, let us take you on an exceptional journey you will never forget.



Hannibal was first ridden by Bike Odyssey's Sam Wood for the BBC documentary 'On Hannibal's Trail' currently showing on National Geographic and Viasat worldwide.

EXCEPTIONAL. CYCLING. ADVENTURES.



STAGE 1 - BARCELONA TO ALBA

16 days
15 nights

1558 km
968 miles

24,964 m
81,903 ft

The meeting point for this stage is the stunning city of Barcelona. The ride starts in the hills above the city, winding through Catalonia and over the Pyrenees mountain range. A challenging and apt warm up to harder stages ahead. We enter France through the historic town of Ceret, gathering strength both in legs and body as we roll through the Languedoc-Roussillon, famous for its vineyards and spectacular scenery.

We then head north on the most iconic leg of Hannibal's journey - across the Alps. Instead of 39 war elephants to provide us with support or invoke fear in our enemies, we have Bike Odyssey's guides to will us over into Italy via Col Agnel. Ask Sam to tell you why Hannibal took this pass over others.

Here is the opportunity to take on a number of cycling's most iconic climbs - Ventoux, Galibier, Alpe d'Huez, Agnel and Izoard. Then peacefully roll through the vine clad hills of Piedmont, the Langhe and Monferrato, following in the tyre tracks of the greatest Italian cyclist, Fausto Coppi.



STAGE 2 - ALBA TO ROME

14 days
13 nights

1207 km
750 miles

22,365 m
73,376 ft

This stage takes us on across the “Spine of Italy”. The Appenines may not be the Pyrenees or Alps but they are a challenge nonetheless, many of which that have featured in the Giro d’Italia. It’s scenic small roads take us through a landscape of vines, castles, agriculture and beautiful hilltop towns. We eat our way through, with justified appetites, the gastronomic pleasures of Reggio Emilia, Modena, Parma and Piacenza and finally into Pisa where our hotel overlooks its magnificent tower.

Now venture further into Tuscany, famously the most beautiful part of Italy. Inspiring artists through the Renaissance, the rolling hills are covered in sunflowers. Along with the Umbrian medieval towns and Lazio’s Roman culture, this week makes for an unbeatable cycling experience.

We pass by Lake Trasimene where Hannibal destroyed a Roman army by forcing them into the lake and the sight of its shores reminds us of whose devastating footsteps we are following, right to the gates of Rome! Majestic and imperial, this city is awash with historical monuments. An apt place to end such an epic expedition, enjoy a few days here to rest your legs and wander about what Rome may have been like in the past.



THE TEAM

OUR GUIDES ARE EXPERTS IN THEIR FIELD AND WE PICK OUR TEAMS CAREFULLY SO WE HAVE EVERYTHING COVERED - LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, LINGUISTICS, BIKE MECHANICS, HISTORY AND CULTURE AND OF COURSE FOOD AND WINE. WE ALSO TRAVEL WITH A SOIGNEUR WHEN OUR GROUP IS OVER 18 PEOPLE.

Hannibal - Barcelona to Rome is our signature tour and we have a wealth of exceptional guides who work on this tour.

Tour Leader Sam Wood

Sam is one of the founders of Bike Odyssey. His original trade was as a Roman archaeologist for the British Museum, London before cycling historical trails to create documentaries for the BBC. He created this trip for the BBC and now has now run it as a guided tour for the last 5 years as it was too good not to share!



Soigneur

There is nothing quite like riding a challenging day and arriving in a beautiful hotel knowing you have your own personal Soigneur waiting to massage your weary legs! We believe every cyclist should experience this care and once you do it will be hard to go without!



Sommelier

For all our sake we often have one of sommelier guides join us on this tour. It is the perfect trip to taste your way across Europe, from Rioja to Châteauneuf-du-Pape to Barolo (and that is just some of the reds). Having an expert talk us through the regions adds both entertainment and education to each nights tipple!



ACCOMMODATION

A KEY ELEMENT IN ANY GREAT TRIP IS MEMORABLE, UNIQUE ACCOMMODATION. EVERY NIGHT WE STRIVE TO ENSURE THAT YOU DON'T FORGET (FOR GOOD REASONS!) YOUR NIGHT'S STAY. OUR FAVORITE PLACES TO STAY ARE CASTLES, MONASTERIES, PARADORS AND COUNTRY LODGES AND WE AVOID CHAIN HOTELS.

On Hannibal - Barcelona to Rome we love our castles staying in at least 4 in northern Italy, one of which overlooks the Trebbia river where Hannibal had his first major battle against the Romans.

Hostal Spa Empuries, Spain.

This beautiful classy hotel overlooks the Mediterranean where we will certainly enjoy a swim after our first day in the saddle! Hannibal also set up camp here on his route north, a fact attested to by the ancient ruins next door to the hotel!



Villa Sparina, Italy.

An 18th century farmhouse surrounded by the panoramic vineyards of Monterotondo, in the region of Piedmont, we sample it's own wines in what is one of the best evenings of the trip.



Antico Borgo di Tabiano Castello, Italy.

Built in the 11th century for its strategic hill top position this hotel is an exceptional stop with a lovely Spa and pool looking down the valley - but the description should warn you it is at the top of a solid climb!



FOOD AND WINE

GREAT FOOD AND WINE IS ESSENTIAL TO ANY SPECIAL TRAVELLING EXPERIENCE. SO EVERY MEAL ON TOUR IS CHOSEN CAREFULLY, WHETHER IT BE A 5 COURSE DEGUSTATION OR AT A LOCAL TRATTORIA. WE ALSO HAVE SOMMELIERS ON OUR GUIDE TEAM SO AS YOU RIDE THROUGH THE VINEYARDS OR SIT DOWN FOR AN APERITIF YOU'LL HAVE THEIR EXPERTISE AT HAND.

The Hannibal is a true culinary odyssey hence our samples coming from the great foodie regions of Catalonia, Spain, Languedoc, France and Emilia Romagna, Italy. So much great and well earned food to enjoy!

Can Roura, Sant Marti d'Empuries, Spain.

After a beautiful walk along the Mediterranean past the ruins of Empuries we find ourselves in the tiny village of Sant Marti where we enjoy the 'Chef's Table' for genuine Catalan fair on our last night in Spain.



Fleurs D' Olargues, France.

One of our favourite stops of any tour. This family run hotel and restaurant in an exceptional setting under the Pont du Diable in Olargue provides a degustation menu which is a sure to impress.



Ristorante Antica Locanda Del Falco in the Castello di Rivalta, Italy.

After an aperitif overlooking the River Trebbia, where Hannibal had his first major battle (and victory of course) against the Romans we enjoy fantastic local Emilia-Romagna cuisine - an exceptional Italian feast!



THE STEEDS

WE HAVE TAKEN A DIFFERENT TACT (AGAIN!) WITH OUR BIKES FROM MOST TOURING COMPANIES.

We run exceptional tours. However what we have learnt is that there are a plethora of bike hire companies across Europe and around the world who hire exceptional bikes. Therefore we stick to our tour expertise and rather than own a tired fleet of bikes we engage with the best of these companies to provide you the best options possible and not just one choice. Therefore if you choose to hire a bike from us this ensures you have a choice of the latest models and best brands always. In Europe we have access to Trek, Specialized, De Rosa and Canyon, mechanical and DI2.

On the Hannibal tour we have access to Trek Madone, Emonda and Domane from Dura Ace to Di2 or down to Tiagra. These are our key supplier but if you are interested in Specialized or De Rosa we can also arrange for you to ride these exceptional machines. Just let us know and we will send you a quote. We even track down 'that bike' if you are searching for a special ride for your tour. We also take no commision on bike hire.



THE HISTORY

Hannibal Barca is one of the greatest commanders of all time. As a leader of the ancient superpower, Carthage, he waged a lifelong war against the Romans and nearly destroyed them. And yet, today we know very little about Hannibal or his people: the Carthaginians. What we do remember is one of his amazing feats fighting the Romans on their own turf. Hannibal led an army that included nearly forty elephants, over the frozen mountain tops of the Alps and into Italy. That achievement, leading the largest land animal over one of the biggest mountain chains, was just part of an incredible journey that took Hannibal and his force of sixty thousand men from southern Spain, through France, into Italy via the Alps and finally, over the sea and back to the now Tunisian city of Carthage. For Hannibal Barca this was a very personal conflict – a family affair. As a boy he'd sworn to his father Hamilcar that he would fight Rome to the death and his top generals were his two brothers, Hasdrubal and Mago. Their struggle was the main event during the biggest and bloodiest conflict of ancient times, the century long Punic Wars (264-146 BC). With Hannibal as commander, it really looked as if Carthage was going to win. European civilisation came so close to being something very different – Romefree, and yet Rome totally dominates our imagination when we think about the ancient world. When Hannibal lived, things were very different.





DATES AND PRICES

Please visit our website
www.bikeodyssey.cc/tours/hannibal for all
dates and prices.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Check out our website at:
www.bikeodyssey.cc/tours/hannibal
for more details on the tour.

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