

ITALY

THE ITALIAN LAKES CYCLE

Sunday 14 June–Wednesday 17 June 2020



The Italian Lakes Cycle

While our Italian Challenge boasts great food, good coffee and spectacular scenery, don't be fooled into thinking this is an easy option. You'll need the carbohydrates to fuel the intense three-and-a-half days of road-bike cycling and demanding climbs as we tick off some of Italy's most well-known and beautiful lakes. Whether this is a summer spin of the legs or your first venture into the world of charity cycling, this is an exceptional Challenge with full support (and gelato!) throughout.



ITINERARY

4 days • 3.5 days cycling • 337km (300km minimum)

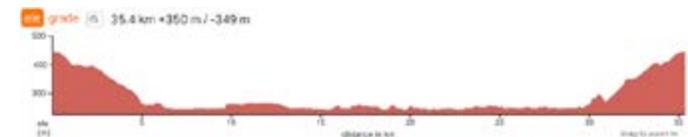
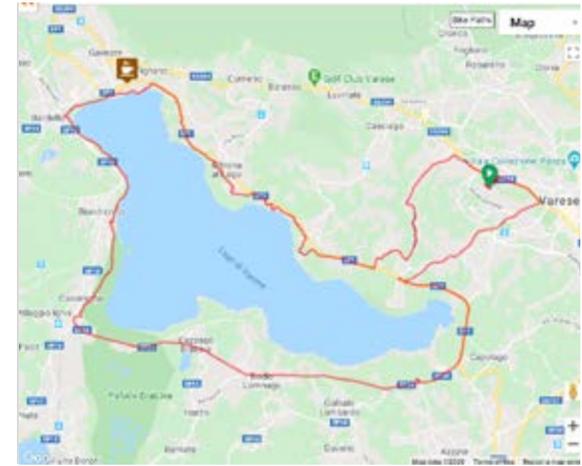
Highlights

- Cycle the shores of four of Italy's most well-known lakes
- Beautiful road cycling with achievable daily distances – but with options to suit the group
- One central base in Varese and a different lake to visit each day
- Visit stunning lakeside villages including beautiful Bellagio
- Extend your stay to enjoy Lake Como at your leisure

Day 1: Sunday 14 June

Lake Varese • Cycle 35km

Following an early morning flight from London to Milan, there's an approximate 45-minute transfer to our hotel in Varese, [Palace Grand Hotel Varese www.palacevarese.com](http://www.palacevarese.com) where we'll be staying for the next three nights. Have your cycling kit and helmet ready because, after a quick bike fitting for all, we set off for a relaxed 35km warm-up around Lake Varese – with the obligatory gelato stop in Gavirate at 22km.

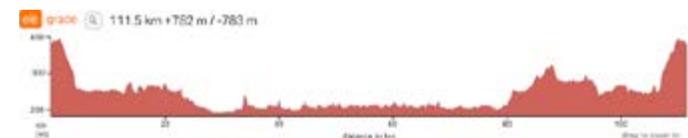
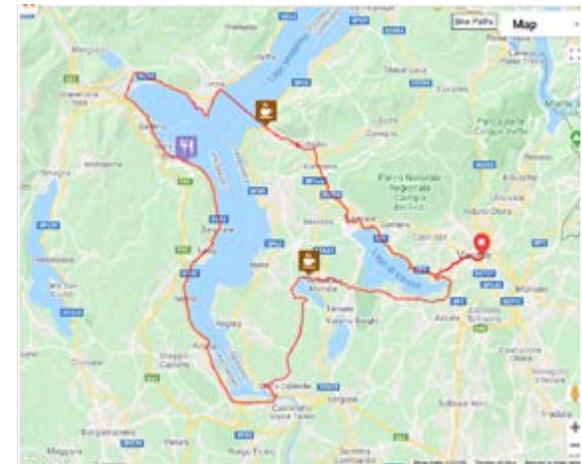


Day 2: Monday 15 June

Lake Maggiore • Cycle 111km/elevation gain +780m

Our first full day of cycling and we're aiming for 111km. If there's time, there may be the option to cycle further if the legs are willing. After morning coffee we'll catch a ferry to the western shore of Lake Maggiore, where we'll spend the majority of our day. Upon reaching the end of the lake trail, we head back to our accommodation via Lake Monate and Varese.

Coffee stop 1: 30km
Lunch: 50km
Coffee stop 2: 91km





Day 3: Tuesday 16 June

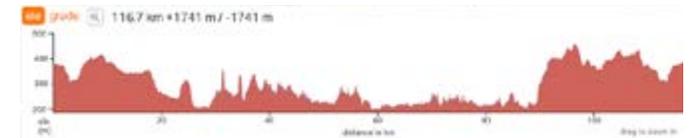
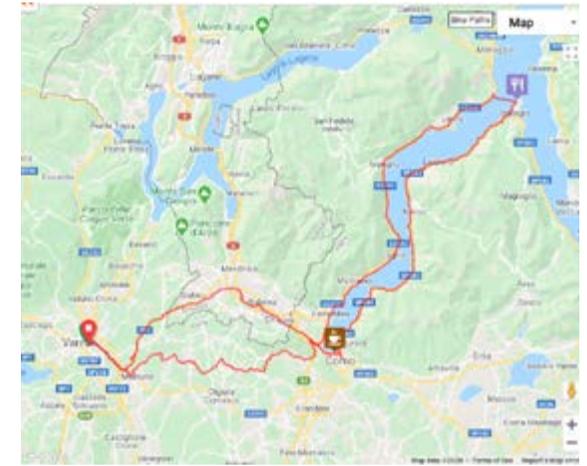
Lake Como • Cycle 117km/elevation gain approx. +1,700m

Today we'll venture eastwards out of Varese, and on to the famous Lake Como. We'll take a brief coffee stop in the town of Como itself, and then cycle the south shore up to iconic Bellagio for lunch. Following refreshments, we'll catch the ferry over to the western side of the lake, taking in the spectacular views of historic Bellagio as we go. We'll head south to pass through Como for the second time, stopping for an afternoon coffee. The last leg of our ride is a little more undulating as we head back to our accommodation.

Coffee stop 1: Como at 30km

Lunch: Bellagio at 59km

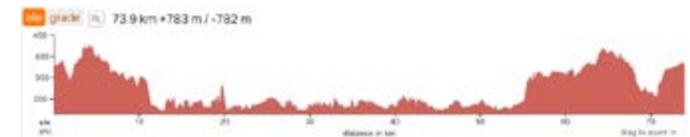
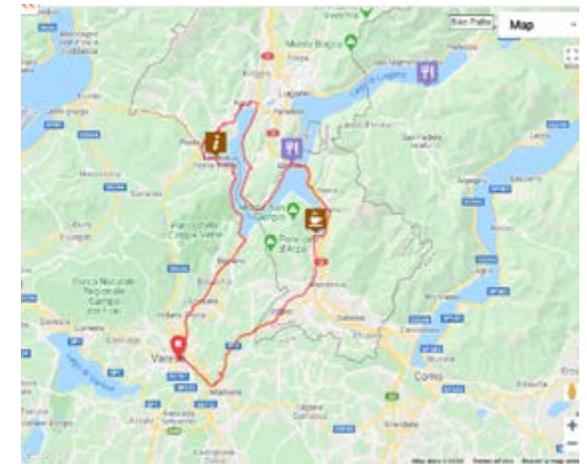
Coffee stop 2: Como at 86km



Day 4: Wednesday 17 June

Lake Lugano • Cycle 74km/elevation gain approx. +780m

Our final day on the bikes and we're heading north-east towards Lake Lugano – warming up our leg muscles along the lake shore before briefly leaving Italy as we cross the Swiss border. Lunch will be in Switzerland today, in the pretty lakeside town of Melide. Post-lunch we follow the lake south to afternoon coffee, where we'll leave the water behind for the final time. There's a gentle climb up away from the lake on our final return to Varese. A quick celebratory bite to eat and it's time to pack up the bikes and make our way back to the airport for the journey home.



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

TRAVEL DETAILS

Flights

You'll need to book your own flights for this Challenge and be at Milan Malpensa airport on Sunday 14 June at approximately 11am to take advantage of the group transfer to Varese. If travelling from London, we recommend the following.

Outbound: Sunday 14 June, LHR to Milan Malpensa
BA 0572 07:15/10:15

Inbound: Wednesday 17 June, Milan Malpensa to LHR
BA 0591 19:10/20:15

If you're making your own additional plans and travelling outside of the dates of this Challenge, then please do let us know well in advance. You'll need to meet the group at Milan Malpensa airport on Sunday 14 June to take the group transfer to the first night's accommodation. Transfers are only included if meeting the group at the scheduled times and meeting places.

Passport and visas

Passports for British citizens should be valid for the proposed duration of your stay; you do not need any additional period of validity on your passport beyond this. The rules for travel to most countries in Europe may change following Brexit. If your adult passport was issued over nine years ago, you may be affected. You should [check your passport is still valid](#) for your trip before booking travel. If you hold a British citizen passport, you do not need a visa to enter Italy.

Citizens of other countries need at least six months' validity on their passports and should check with the relevant embassy for further entry requirements. Any required visas and associated costs will be met by the participant.



Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) advice

We recommend that you periodically review the travel advice issued by the FCO, which relates to all aspects of your destination, at www.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo and specifically www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/italy

Baggage

Your allowable checked baggage is one main luggage item on the recommended BA flight, which should not exceed 23kg (depending on your route/ticket type). One item of hand baggage is also permitted which should not exceed 56cm x 45cm x 25cm. If travelling with any other airline, we suggest you check their baggage allowance online. Norwood is not responsible for any excess charges incurred. We advise that you carry your cycle helmet, a set of cycling clothes and any medication you require, with your hand luggage.

Insurance

Travel insurance covering the event you are undertaking, trip curtailment/cancellation, emergency medical treatment, hospitalisation, air evacuation and repatriation is a compulsory condition of your booking. If you haven't got your own insurance in place, we can add you to the Norwood insurance policy for an additional charge of £25.

- If you choose not to take out the appropriate travel insurance, should you fall ill or be involved in an accident you will not be covered for those associated costs.
- We strongly recommend you are insured for the full duration of your trip and the policy is taken out prior to the date of your departure and does not cease until you have returned.
- If you have an existing policy, we highly recommend you call your insurers and confirm that it meets with the requirement of the trip and that you are fully covered for

the event you are undertaking, clarifying its precise nature to your insurers.

- You must also make sure you inform the insurance company of any pre-existing medical conditions before travel. Failure to do so may invalidate your policy or any subsequent claim.

Free European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

A valid EHIC gives you the right to access state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in another European Economic Area (EEA) country or Switzerland.

The EHIC covers treatment that is medically necessary until your planned return home. Treatment should be provided on the same basis as it would to a resident of that country, either at a reduced cost or, in many cases, free of charge. The EHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs, such as mountain rescue in ski resorts, being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. It is, therefore, important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy in place before you travel. Some insurers now insist you hold an EHIC, and many will waive the excess if you have one.

You can apply for, or renew, an EHIC using the official EHIC online application form at www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/startApplication.do This is free of charge.

Health and vaccinations

At least eight weeks before your trip, check the latest country-specific health advice from the [National Travel Health Network and Centre \(NaTHNaC\)](http://www.nhs.uk/travelhealth) on the TravelHealthPro website at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/>. Each country-specific page has information on vaccine recommendations, any current health risks or outbreaks, and factsheets with information on staying healthy abroad. Guidance is also available from NHS (Scotland) on the FitForTravel website at www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/home

General information on [travel vaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/travelvaccinations) and a [travel health checklist](http://www.nhs.uk/travelhealthchecklist) is available on the NHS website. You may then wish to contact your health adviser or pharmacy for advice on other preventive measures and managing any pre-existing medical conditions while you're abroad.

All travellers are advised to ensure that their tetanus and polio vaccinations are up to date. This is a guideline only. You must seek professional medical advice from your GP or local travel clinic. You should bring your own regular medication with sufficient supplies for the whole trip and a small first aid kit. You must also advise Norwood of any pre-existing medical conditions and complete a medical form when you sign up. These details will be passed to our tour doctor who may wish to contact you prior to the event to clarify any medical conditions or requirements.





CHALLENGE DETAILS

How we grade your Challenge

We want to give you an incredible experience but the overriding objective is, of course, to raise as much money as you can for Norwood. With this in mind, you have to EARN your sponsorship money and this can only be achieved if there is truly an element of challenge involved.

Our Challenges are graded moderate, challenging, tough and extreme. Many factors will influence this categorisation – terrain, distances, climate, living conditions, altitudes, climbs etc. The grade allocated, however, will reflect the overall level of Challenge with some days being more challenging than others.

- Challenging events require you to have a reasonable level of fitness and an open mind to new situations.
- Tough events have usually longer itineraries, may take place in more remote areas and require a good level of fitness.
- Extreme events require a very good level of fitness, are hard going, may involve more basic conditions and often involve longer days, steep climbs and descents.

How challenging is it?

This is a moderate Challenge, graded 3.5 out of 5 – but do not be fooled! There are some long daily distances and up to six to eight hours in the saddle. While it has been designed to be challenging, this ride is achievable with some regular training. Ideally you should be a keen cyclist, enjoy training and ride regularly. You need to have a good level of endurance with an ability to sustain the level of effort required over a period of days. You should, therefore, be doing regular exercise with some serious cycle training, including long rides in the countryside of five or more hours.

Bike hire

If you don't have a suitable bike for this Challenge or just prefer not to take your own, then you can always hire one of the good-quality bikes being made available in this country. The size of bike will be determined by your height, but it will come with flat pedals as standard – so you may want to bring all your own personal cycling equipment (saddle, pedals, bar ends etc) with you, which can be fitted on the first day along with any other adjustments that may be required.

Bringing your own bike

We recommend a road/race (or sports hybrid) bike for this Challenge that is suitable for long mileage and multi-day cycling, on account of its lightness, gears and quicker tyres. A mountain bike is not suitable. Your bike should be appropriately serviced and checked. As a guide, you should check the following.

- Saddle and handlebars are firmly tightened and set to the correct height.
- Cranks and pedals are tight, and the chain is in good condition and not about to break.
- Tyres are not bald and with worn sidewalls.
- Brakes work well and brake blocks are in good condition.

The in-country team leaders, support drivers and mechanics will be there to support you on the Challenge and to repair any mechanical failures wherever possible. They will carry a selection of typical parts and spares but, if you have any unusual or specialist parts (e.g. disc brakes, carbon wheels, suspension), it is advisable to bring along replacements with you that can be carried in the support vehicle in case of emergency.

Travelling with your bike

It's really easy these days to book your bike in as sports equipment into the hold of your preferred airline. There is usually an additional charge for this, which we recommend is booked and paid for in advance to avoid any unnecessary delays and excess charges on arrival at the airport. Most airlines will, however, have strict guidelines (available online) as to how your bike should be packed and these should be referred to and adhered to prior to departure.

Your bike taken for you: As an optional extra and to ease some of the stress of travel, we can also organise a return bike transportation service, where your bike can be dropped off at a central point and taken to Italy for you. This is, however, dependent upon demand as a minimum number of bikes will need to be transported for the service to be cost effective. If you're interested in this option, please contact the team after registration and we'll keep you advised of arrangements and the additional charge for this service.

Cycling kit

The kit required for each Challenge differs slightly, but there are certain items that are consistent in every Challenge. Full kit lists will be provided after registration with details of any specific items that may be needed, but as a guide the basics are shown below.

ESSENTIAL

- Your own helmet (you'll not be allowed to cycle without one)
- Cycling gloves
- Padded cycling shorts
- Water bottle/hydration backpack
- Small day rucksack or bike bag for carrying essential items when cycling
- Light waterproofs
- Casual shoes/clothes for the evening

OPTIONAL

- Your own saddle, pedals, bar ends, toe cleats and any other personal cycling equipment you see fit, if you're choosing to hire a bike

Accommodation

Accommodation is twin sharing with limited singles available on request, subject to availability and at an additional charge of £120. The Palace Grand Hotel is located in Varese, set in ancient mature grounds and delivering superb views including the city centre, the UNESCO heritage-listed Sacro Monte, Lake Varese and the Monte Rosa massif. It opened in 1913 and was recently fully renovated, retaining the features of its original design by Giuseppe Sommaruga, one of the most famous architects in the Art Nouveau period. It contains a restaurant, where we'll eat each evening, as well as an outdoor swimming pool for cooling off post-ride.

Food

We're pleased to say that your trip includes breakfast, picnic lunch en route and all evening meals, which will be taken at the Palace Grand Hotel, Varese. Meals will be substantial and vegetarian, but it is still a good idea to bring your own energy bars and snacks to keep you going during the day. Breakfast at the hotel will be a self-service buffet while evening meals will be a vegetarian set menu with private dining for the group. Food en route, packed lunches or meals provided by the in-country team will be vegetarian with permitted fish/cheese. More information will be provided in the lead-up to the event.

All water in the accommodation and on the Challenge is, of course, safe to drink.

We can cater for all other dietary requirements as long as we know in advance. Just complete the relevant section on your registration/information form.

Weather

The weather in June is pleasant with nice evenings and temperatures between 13°C and 25°C and is one of the best months to cycle. There is a chance of rainfall, so we do recommend that light waterproofs are always packed and ready in your day bag.

Currency

The local currency is the euro. We recommend that you bring approximately £100–£150 spending money which will be sufficient for drinks, any personal expenses and souvenirs.

We also advise that you bring a credit card for emergencies. All major forms of credit card are accepted. Do let your bank know in advance that you'll be travelling with your card.

Tips

The local crew and guides work extremely hard and it is customary to tip the ground crew at the end of the Challenge. As a show of appreciation, we will be collecting €30–€35 per person at the beginning of your Challenge.

TYPICAL DAY

Each Challenge varies and timings will be adjusted on a daily basis to reflect the mixed ability of the group, expected distances to be covered and the level of challenge on that particular day – such as long distances and tough climbs, which obviously take longer to complete. Your typical day will be as follows.

6:30/7:30 Breakfast

Come down in your cycling gear so you can be packed and ready to go. Be sure to eat and drink plenty, but we recommend you don't eat so much that you feel ill for the first few hours of the ride.

8:00 Assemble pre-ride

Drop your luggage in the support vehicle, grab your bike and get ready for the pre-departure ride briefing.

Top tip: Get up early so you don't have to rush. Give yourself extra time in the morning so you don't forget important things and potentially hold up the group. Do also check your bike well before the scheduled departure time as if there are any issues, it will be better to sort them now rather than at the "start line".

8:30 Set off

We all roll out and get moving on the bikes.

11:00 Morning refreshment stop

The support vehicle will be waiting at a designated coffee stop in case you need to fill up your water bottle or access your day bag. We'll also carry some snacks if you're running low. Please carry money with you so that you don't have to access the van at every stop. A member of staff will be on hand to oversee the bikes.

13:00 Lunch

Depending on the trip and number of cyclists, this might be a picnic stop in a town square or park, or in a local café. In either case, our support vehicles will be on hand so that you can access your day bag if you need any spare kit, top up bottles, and attend to any minor mechanical issues that might have arisen.

15:00 Afternoon refreshment stop

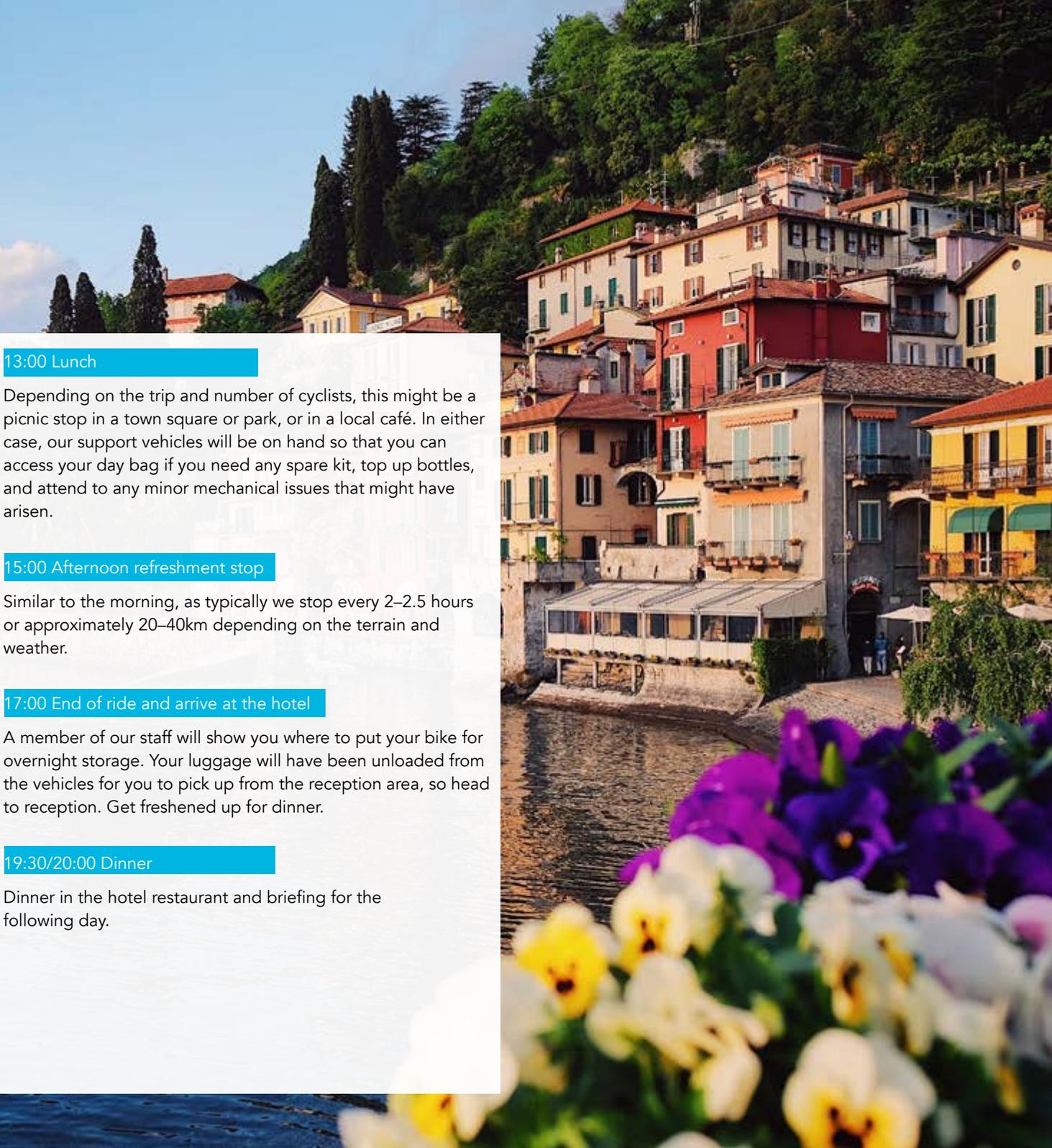
Similar to the morning, as typically we stop every 2–2.5 hours or approximately 20–40km depending on the terrain and weather.

17:00 End of ride and arrive at the hotel

A member of our staff will show you where to put your bike for overnight storage. Your luggage will have been unloaded from the vehicles for you to pick up from the reception area, so head to reception. Get freshened up for dinner.

19:30/20:00 Dinner

Dinner in the hotel restaurant and briefing for the following day.



CHALLENGE SUMMARY



What's included

- Three nights half-board accommodation (twin-sharing) staying in one centrally based hotel in Varese. Limited singles available on request
- Transfers to and from Milan Malpensa airport if taking the recommended flights/meeting at the specified point and time
- Picnic lunches on cycling days, likely to be café based
- Fully supported ride with organised refreshment stops, two ride leaders, support vehicles, mechanic and doctor
- Guided rides in the local region
- FREE Norwood cycle jersey

What's NOT included

- Your flights. We recommend outbound, Sunday 14 June (AM), London to Milan. Inbound Wednesday 17 June (PM), Milan to London. Flight time is 1 hour, 55 minutes/GMT + 2hrs
- Bike hire or any personal cycling equipment, clothing or helmet. Bike hire can be organised for you
- Optional bike transfer from UK to Milan and return back to the UK
- Travel insurance
- Any personal expenses, coffees, tips, trips and entry fees

Fundraising

Fundraising is largely a test of imagination, organisation and perseverance. The more you make your own personal fundraising campaign stand out from everyone else's, the more successful you'll be. While you're responsible for raising the funds yourself, we're very happy to offer you some helpful hints to help you on your way. When you sign up to one of our Challenges, we'll send you our fundraising e-kit, packed full of tips to help you achieve your fundraising target.

PLUS, IF YOU SIGN UP FOR TWO CHALLENGES IN 2020, WE'LL REDUCE THE COMBINED MINIMUM FUNDRAISING TARGET BY £500.

Training

It's really important that everyone follows a reasonably serious course of training in order to get the maximum benefit. The more you train, the more you'll enjoy the Challenge. Although these events are achievable, they're also designed to take you out of your comfort zone. You'll be cycling up to eight hours each day, on several consecutive days.

The amount of training required will depend on your current level of cycling fitness, but we recommend that while out cycling you get used to the following. Cycling with wind resistance. Drinking from a water bottle while riding. Hill climbing. Long periods of time in the saddle. Cycling off-road, on gravel, sand and rough terrain. (Find some sections of bridle paths through woods and over farmland.) Getting your knees accustomed to hours of pedalling. Learning how to use gears.

We have a full training guide online, but Norwood also offers a unique level of personal support through our Norwood Cycling Club and our extensive network of experienced riders.

This includes the following.

- Regular rides from Radlett, on the first Sunday of the month
- Cycling tips and kit shopping advice from a cycling expert
- FREE weekly spinning classes at the Village Gym in Elstree
- Eight-week watt bike training programme, leading up to the Challenge, providing personalised tips on endurance, stamina building, technique and cycling performance

PRICING

Under 35 Years

Option	A	B	C
Registration fee	£195	£900 (includes £195 deposit)	£1,145 (includes £195 deposit)
Minimum fundraising	£950	£295	—

Over 35 Years

Option	A	B	C
Registration fee	£295	£900 (includes £295 deposit)	£1,295 (includes £295 deposit)
Minimum fundraising	£1,000	£395	—

For more tips on fundraising, details of payment plans and direct debits, family promotional offers, training, or any questions on any of the Challenges, please contact the Challenges team or Julie Braithwaite directly on **020 8420 6811** or email julie.braithwaite@norwood.org.uk

Register at www.norwood.org.uk/pages/challenges/

