



# Etape du Tour

## Coaching camp

9 to 15 June 2024

5 day cycling camp with Alpine Cols,  
preparation for the 2024 Etape du Tour





# Welcome!

*The Alpine Cols difference:*

- *A real expertise and focus on one-on-one coaching for performance.*
- *Intimate knowledge of the best climbs in the Alps.*
- *Excellent hotels, fantastic food and 5\* service!*

**Marvin, Emmanuelle, Olivier, Stéphane** and **Silas** are looking forward to a wonderful week's cycling with you, having fun while we learn and train together. Our goal is that you have a fantastic time and leave us feeling well-prepared for the **Etape du Tour**.

This camp includes a full reconnaissance of the **Etape**. In addition, you can expect well-planned rides, workshops and one-on-one coaching sessions to help you improve your performance. Some of the rides are quite long, but there is always a strong focus on technique, such as climbing, descending or how to pace yourself throughout the Etape.

The off-the-bike activities give you key points to focus on the following day as well as during the remaining time before the event. There will also be daily massages available to help recovery during the camp.

We have chosen two great hotels, the **Lou Castelet** in Carros near Nice airport and **La Bonne Auberge** in Saint-Martin-Vésubie. From convivial buffet breakfasts to the late lunch buffet when we get back from the rides and relaxed dinners in the cosy dining room, French gastronomy takes pride of place and the meals are a real highlight of the day.

You should leave us feeling completely ready to ride the Etape, confident in your skills and ready to give it your best shot. More than that, we hope you feel part of the friendly Alpine Cols community and come back again and again - as is already the case for many of you!

Safe rides, Marvin & Emmanuelle



*“The experience with Alpine Cols was excellent. I have done several cycling camps, and I must say this one was close to perfection.”*

*- Stephanie, Paris*





## Is this coaching camp for you?

**YES:** if you want to **learn to cycle faster**, especially for the **Etape du Tour** or events like the **Haute Route** and the **Marmotte**.

**YES:** if you want to **make friends** and **have fun** with **other like-minded people**.

**YES:** if you want to **cycle some great routes in the Maritime Alps**.

**NO:** *if you are essentially a leisure rider with no particular interest in riding faster.*

**NO:** *if you prefer the lifestyle associated with large tourist hotels and easy access to bars, nightclubs etc.*

## Coaching Camp Highlights

### On the bike

- The goal of this camp is to help you become a faster and more skilful cyclist. The week is excellent preparation for mountain sportives in general and the Etape du Tour in particular.
- During the week we suggest limiting the intensity. The pace is Endurance, Zone 2. Different groups will form so that you ride with people at your own level.
- You may however ride harder if you wish, and the coaches will help you define your own training camp objectives and daily pace.
- The coach to rider ratio is 1:5 or better, ensuring that you will have plenty of one-on-one coaching.
- There is a strong focus on technique with plentiful use of video for analysis and feedback.

### Off the bike

- Recovery is the first priority, with a post-ride buffet lunch back at the hotel followed by optional stretching sessions, massage and/or use of electro-stimulation.
- Daily debrief with a coach looking at your ride file and power data.
- Evening sessions on:
  - Climbing powerfully and efficiently
  - Descending fast and safely
  - Using power meter data to improve your performance
  - Training for your target event
  - Eating and drinking for performance
  - Competing at sportives and GranFondos
- Time to relax in an authentic Provençal village. Enjoy a coffee and pastry in one of the numerous local cafés.



## How fast are the rides?

You may be asking yourself, “*will I be able to keep up with these guys?*” This is a perfectly normal question: nobody wants to be left behind or to feel they are always holding the group back!

The answer is that *so long as you are comfortable riding for 5 hours a day*, you will be fine. The average age of our guests is ~45, with many in their 50’s. Usually, about one third are women.

We use a number of techniques to support riders of different levels:

- The group of ~10 riders typically splits into two or three smaller groups by level.
- Each group is supported by a coach at all times.
- The faster riders will often ride extra distance or do more climbing.
- The faster riders may start later.

Rest assured that we have long experience of supporting mixed groups in the mountains. We treat everybody the same way, regardless of whether you are the fastest or the slowest.

Everybody rides at their own pace, and we judge the timings so that the group is always well supported.

If you have any concerns about your ability to fit in, please contact Marvin at [info@alpinecols.com](mailto:info@alpinecols.com)



## GRANFONDO COACHING CAMP

### ON-THE-BIKE PROGRAMME

Date	Alpine Cols programme	Timings		Major climbs	Distance / vertical
Sun	<b>Arrive in Nice</b> ; transfer to <b>Carros</b> Set up bikes; briefing for the week	15h 18h30	Nice airport at 15 minutes	-	-
Mon	<b>Descending Clinic</b> ; col de Vence Coaching focus: <b>descending</b>	9h 14h	Depart Carros Return to Carros	Col de Vence	65km / 1,250m
Tue	<b>Vallée de l'Esteron</b> Coaching focus: <b>climbing</b>	9h 15h	Depart Carros Return to Carros	Gilette Conségudes	81km / 1,200m
Wed	<b>Etape du Tour reconnaissance Part 1</b> Coaching focus: <b>pacing</b>	8h30 15h30	Depart Carros (minibus) Arrive in Saint-Martin-Vésubie	Col de Braus Col de Turini	94km / 2,800m
Thu	<b>Etape du Tour reconnaissance Part 2</b> Coaching focus: <b>nutrition</b>	8h30 15h30	Depart Saint-Martin-Vésubie Return to Saint-Martin-Vésubie	Col de la Colmiane Col de la Couillole Col de la Colmiane	90km / 2,890m
Fri	<b>Col de Turini &amp; hilltop villages</b> Coaching focus: <b>endurance</b>	9h 15h	Depart Saint-Martin-Vésubie Arrive in Carros	Col de Turini	98km / 2,100m or 65km / 710m
Sat	<b>Departure day</b>	-	-	<b>TOTALS 433km / 10,265m</b>	

Please note the programme is necessarily subject to change based on road and weather conditions. There are always options to vary the planned distance and ride more (or less) if you prefer.





## Col de Colmiane

*“It was so clear you were prepared to do "whatever it takes" with a smile on your face to make our experience special. Felt like I was on a tour team!!!”*

*- Scott, Ontario*



## Sunday

The hotel is in Carros, just a few kilometres from Nice airport and the transfer takes around 15 minutes.

The camp begins with a welcome drink and **briefing at 18:30**, followed by dinner with the coaches and other riders.

## Monday

**Distance:** 65 km

**Elevation:** 1,250m+

**Ride time:** 4-5 hours

**Focus:** **Descending**



Descending is a crucial skill to master for cycling in the mountains. Our goal on this first day is to help you improve your ability to **descend safely and confidently**.

We begin by warming up on the climb to the hilltop village of Carros, where we organise the descending clinic. Each rider has the opportunity to descend multiple times with a coach, and to be videoed multiple times. This enables us to provide **immediate feedback**, and the video allows you to see your own technique.

We then make our way to the major climb of the day, the col de Vence, via the hilltop villages of Gattières and St-Jeannet.

There will be plenty of opportunities to practice descending on the long descent from Courségoules back to Carros.





# Col de Turini

*“This was the best cycling training camp I have ever been to. I improved my skills in descending in the drops and increased confidence in doing so. Also, the food was fantastic!”*

*- Katrina, Melbourne*





## Tuesday

**Distance:** 81 km      **Elevation:** 1,200m+  
**Ride time:** 5 hours      **Focus:** **Climbing**



Tuesday's ride begins with the short but steep climb to Le Broc, followed by descending back to the valley floor. We climb again to Gilette and then follow the ups and downs of the beautiful Vallée de l'Esteron to the village of Roquesteron, where we turn and take a different road back to Carros.

The coaching focus is on climbing technique. We look at your **seated pedalling technique** and how it varies between the moderate and steep pitches, and we look at your **standing technique** to help you "dance" on the pedals like a pro.

The gradients vary a lot on this route and will allow us to contrast climbing techniques between climbs of different gradients. The goal is to learn to climb efficiently, thus maximising the use of your energy on long rides in the mountains.

## Wednesday

**Distance:** 94 km      **Elevation:** 2,800m+  
**Ride time:** 7 hours      **Focus:** **Pacing**



Today we ride the **first half of the Etape du Tour** route. We will transfer you by minibus to Nice, and begin the ride at the exit of the town.

This ride is your opportunity to familiarise yourself with the route of the Etape, while practicing your skills. The coaching focus is **pacing**, to make sure you are riding at the right intensity to go the distance.

During the ride we will first climb the short col de Nice and then the much more serious double of the **col de Braus** and the **col de Turini**. Both of these have long, technical descents that need concentration.

We will spend the night at an hotel in Saint-Martin-Vésubie, which is a delightfully characterful town, typical of Provence.





# Col de Braus

*“I got a lot of personalised very useful feedback and learned how to improve my technique during the post-ride video analysis. The ambiance is great and being able to focus only on my riding made me feel like a pro.”*

Jan, Switzerland



## Thursday

**Distance:** 90 km      **Elevation:** 2,890m+  
**Ride time:** 7-8 hours      **Focus:** **Nutrition**



Starting from Saint-Martin-Vésubie, we will ride the **second part of the Etape du Tour**: up and over the **col de la Colmiane** and then on to the finish on top of the **col de la Couillole**.

We will conclude the ride by returning to Saint-Martin-Vésubie by the same route in reverse, thus giving you two opportunities to familiarise yourself with the route.

The coaching focus will be on **nutrition**, which together with **pacing** are the two keys to a successful ride in July.

You will also of course have ample opportunity to practice climbing and descending. The coaches will be on their bikes with you throughout the week to provide feedback and help you learn.

## Friday

**Distance:** 98 (or 65) km      **Elevation:** 2,100m+ (or 710m)  
**Ride time:** 7 hours      **Focus:** **Endurance**



On this, the final day of the camp, we will ride back from Saint-Martin-Vésubie to Carros. We offer two alternative routes: if you are feeling strong, we will take you back over the col de Turini for a ride of 98km and 2,100m of climbing. If you feel an easy day would be more appropriate, the more direct route is 65km and only 710m of climbing.

Either way, the coaching focus is on **endurance**. At the start of the day you will have ridden 330 mountainous kilometres in 4 days, climbing some 8,140m. Our role as coaches is to help you bring all the skills together: climbing, descending, pacing and nutrition in order to get the most out of the week.





# Col de la Couillole

*“This was the best cycling training camp I have ever been to. I improved my skills in descending in the drops and increased confidence in doing so. Also, the food was fantastic!”*

- Katrina, Melbourne



## GRANFONDO COACHING CAMP

### OFF-THE-BIKE PROGRAMME

Date	Time	Coach's Corner evening sessions
Sun	18h30	Descending: fast and safe!
Mon	18h30	Climbing, pedalling technique
Tue	18h30	Pacing at the Etape du Tour
Wed	18h30	Nutrition for performance
Thu	18h30	Mental strategies
Fri	18h30	Tips for sportives and GranFondos

Note:

Other technical sessions are available, on request.







*“Alpine Cols are truly remarkable and have helped us in learning proper descending techniques, pacing and climbing skills. We always have a great time – I would highly recommend Alpine Cols to all levels of riders.”* – Scott & Char, Arizona

# Recovery

In addition to your usual recovery routines (such as drinking lots of fluids and eating appropriately, stretching gently and getting lots of rest, preferably with your legs raised), we provide\* the following aids to recovery:

- **Compression socks and compression shorts.** These work by compressing the large, superficial veins and thus forcing the blood to return through the veins which are much deeper in the muscle. This has a positive impact on the rate of recovery by accelerating the metabolism of the by-products of exercise, the elimination of toxins and the replacement of glycogen in the muscles.
- **Compex Electrostimulation.** This is a medical device that has been adapted for use in sports. It works by stimulating the muscles to contract in a specific pattern, thus enhancing the blood flow. It is effective alone but even more so when combined with compression socks. The 25' session should take place before any massage.
- **Massage and Osteopathy.** These interventions by qualified practitioners can be effective in accelerating blood flow, reducing inflammation, eliminating toxins in muscles and removing adhesions. Osteopathy can also help prevent injuries, correct imbalances and re-establish proper posture.

## \*Availability

- Compression socks and shorts can be purchased from our shop.
- We have 2 Compex electrostimulation devices available for you to try, as well as others which may be purchased.
- Massage and Osteopathy are available each afternoon on request, at additional cost. The sessions must be pre-booked.





A photograph of three cyclists in red jerseys and white helmets riding up a paved mountain road. The road is flanked by a metal guardrail and a steep, grassy mountain slope. In the background, there are more mountains and a cloudy sky. The text 'Col de la Colombière' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

# Col de la Colombière

*“A highly capable, professional, trustworthy and fun team. I guarantee you’ll come away from their camps with a greater belief in your riding ability. I couldn’t recommend them more...”* - Eimear, UK

# Coaching

Why would you need a coach? You know how to ride a bike, right?

Put simply, cycling at speed in the mountains is highly technical and we have yet to meet someone who couldn't learn and improve! Besides, if all professional riders have coaches, why wouldn't you benefit too?

Here's what you can expect from us:

- **Fully qualified, experienced coaches.** Alpine Cols coaches are all fully qualified and have between 10 and 20 years of active coaching experience. In addition, they are excellent competitors in their own right.
- **Coaching focus.** The key skills for all mountain sportives are **climbing, pacing, descending, nutrition** and **recovery** (for multi-day events). We use a mix of observation, oral feedback on the bike, evening technical sessions, video feedback and written feedback at the end of the camp.
- **Riding with power.** All Alpine Cols coaches ride with power meters and use power in their coaching practice and for their own benefit. We have partnered with **Infocrank®**, the official power meter of the UCI and British Cycling, chosen for its superior accuracy, stability and reliability under all conditions.
- **Up to date.** We constantly update our knowledge and coaching practice in line with new research. For 2024, we added new material in the areas of Pacing, Durability, Nutrition, and Mental Skills, any one of which could make a significant difference to your performance!





## Coaching Staff



**Marvin** (MA, MBA, BC L3)



**Olivier** (PhD, BPJEPS)



**Silas** (BSc, DBS)

Emmanuelle, Marvin, Olivier, Silas, Stéphane and Yannick are not only highly qualified, experienced cycling coaches but also strong (or very strong!) competitors in their own right.

Olivier is a past winner of the Tour de l'Ain and has placed 10<sup>th</sup> at the Marmotte; Silas was vice-champion of New Zealand and an international triathlete; Stéphane has placed well at countless Alpine sportives, Yannick has gained several podium places at Elite level and Marvin and Emmanuelle are often on the podium in their age categories.

They love sharing their experience and will work with you to help you reach your potential as a cyclist.



**Emmanuelle** (MA, MBA, BC L2)



**Stéphane** (BEESAC)



**Yannick** (MSc, BPJEPS)



## PACKAGE PRICES

From **Sun 9 June** to **Sat 15 June 2024**

Rooms in a 4\* hotel (in Carros)

- Twin-share: **€2,290**
- Single supplement: **€400**
- Non-cyclist (twin-share): **€1,540**

Apartments in a 3\* apartment complex (in Carros)

- Twin-share: **€2,240**
- Single supplement: **€350**
- Non-cyclist (twin-share): **€1,490**

*5% "welcome back" discount for returnees*

*10% discount off second package booked the same year*

## ADDITIONAL NIGHTS

Please contact us for your personal quote if you would like to stay additional nights in the region.

**BOOK  
NOW**

## WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR PACKAGE

- Accommodation and all meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- On-the-bike coaching
- On-the-road support vehicle with free energy drinks and snacks
- Mechanical assistance
- Coach's Corner evening sessions on cycling performance
- Photographs taken during the week (digital copies)

## WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- Travel to/from Carros (15 minutes from Nice airport)
- Bicycle hire
- Minibar or drinks at the hotel bar
- Coffee or snacks during café stops
- Massage (optional extra)





# Col de la Croix Fry



*“I would recommend Alpine Cols to anyone who was serious about improving their skills on the bike. I felt the coaching was good value for money and far exceeded any other cycling holiday I have been on ”*

*- James, UK*

## Practical matters

- **Airport transfers**
  - Our hotel in Carros is called the Lou Castelet. It is approximately 15 minutes from Nice airport, where there are plenty of taxis available. We use this same hotel at the beginning and end of the stay, and you will be able to leave your bike box here throughout the week.
- **Weather**
  - The normal weather in June near the coast is 25°-30°C and mostly sunny.
  - HOWEVER, rain is possible, especially inland, and it may be cooler.
  - It will often be cooler on the summits where the maximum day temperatures can vary between 15°C and 25°C (colder if wet).
  - Bring cycling clothes appropriate for both wet and dry weather and temperatures between 10° and 30°C.
- **Currency and language**
  - The currency is the Euro and the language is French.
  - Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted or can be used to withdraw Euros from a bank machine.



## Tips before travel

### Preparing your bike

- Please get your bike serviced by a qualified mechanic. Tell the mechanic that you will be riding 300-400km through the mountains so the bike needs a thorough check, including the bottom bracket, the head tube and the wheels as well as the obvious brakes, gears, cables and chain.
- Ride the bike for at least 50km after the service to make sure any stretch in the cables or other kinks are ironed out.
- Make sure you have appropriate gears. We recommend a compact chainset (50/34) and a cassette suitable for steep climbs (e.g. 11/32 or 11/34).
- Your tyres must be in good condition.

### Travelling with your bike

- If you are new to travelling with your bike, give yourself plenty of time to pack it, preferably the day before travel.
- Follow the instructions of the bike box manufacturer carefully.
- Leave the CO2 cylinders at home (the airline won't accept them).
- Include any special tools required to re-assemble your bike.
- If you need help setting up your bike on arrival we will be happy to assist.



# Col de Turini

*“The standard of the coaching camps run by Marvin and Alpine Cols is absolutely second to none. We have done a number of them over recent years including Tenerife, St Tropez and the Alps: all have been excellent.”* - Jonathan, UK



## Training in the final weeks before the camp

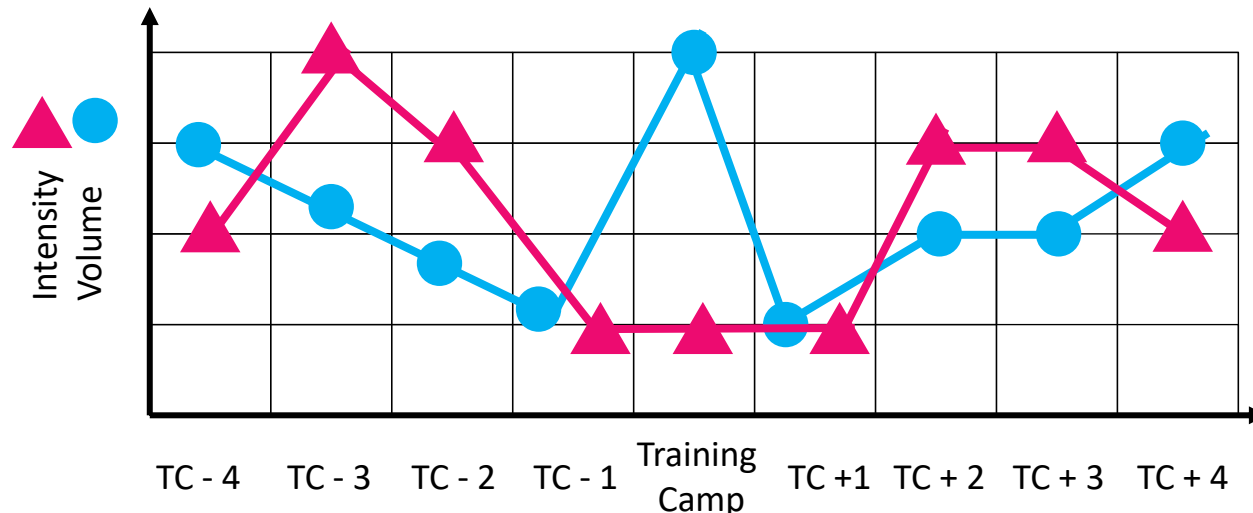
During the training camp you will ride up to 500km and climb up to 14,000m+, over about 30 hours of cycling. For most amateur cyclists this represents a very significant increase in volume over a normal training week. In order to survive the week, the intensity will have to be relatively low: you will be climbing in Zones 2 (Endurance) and 3 (Tempo), very little, if any in Zone 4 (Threshold).

In an ideal world, you will have prepared for this by building both volume and intensity during the three to six months before the camp. These are our suggestions for the final month:

- Reduce the volume and increase the intensity for the first three weeks. In practical terms, this means replacing long rides at tempo/threshold pace by shorter rides including intervals in Z4 (Threshold) and Z5 (Vo2Max).
- Reduce both volume and intensity for the final week, in order to taper and arrive at the camp well rested.
- Make sure you maintain your core strength and flexibility with appropriate off-the-bike exercises.

Once you return home (if you are NOT riding the Etape du Tour):

- Reduce volume and keep the intensity low for the first week
- Increase the intensity significantly and the volume a little for the next two weeks
- Thereafter, return to your normal training regime.



**We will provide individual “taper” recommendations for all participants at the Etape du Tour**

**Suggested interval sessions for TC-3, TC-2:**

**Zone 4 (Threshold)**

2 sets of 4 x [5'Z4 – 2'Z1] , 10' between each set

**Zone 5 (VO2Max)**

3 sets of 5 x [2'Z5 – 3'Z1], 10' between each set

Note: these are general recommendations and should be adapted to your individual context.

# Insurance

## Accident & illness

Please note that you must have insurance in place in order to cover the cost of assistance and repatriation in the event of accident or illness. The insurance must provide specific cover for cycling and should cover the following risks:

- medical expenses,
- personal accident,
- personal liability,
- emergency rescue,
- repatriation if you become too ill to travel,
- cancellation or curtailment of your holiday,
- travel delay,
- loss or delay to your baggage,
- loss or theft of personal effects and legal expenses.

If you are based in the UK, we suggest you contact one of the specialist cycling insurance firms.

Please make sure that your cover specifically includes cycling in France.

## Cancellation

You should also take out cancellation insurance to cover the cost of your cycling holiday should you be forced to cancel for any reason. Cancellation charges will be applied on the following scale:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| – More than 8 weeks prior to your holiday start date: | Deposit only                      |
| – 4-8 Weeks prior to your holiday start date:         | 50% of the total amount invoiced  |
| – Less than 4 weeks prior to your holiday start date: | 100% of the total amount invoiced |

Cancellation charges do not apply in the case of government-imposed Covid restrictions. If you are forced to cancel due to changing government regulations you will receive a full refund.



## Suggested Kit List

ITEM	CHECK
Bike (unless hiring)	
Spare tyres & inner tubes (2 each)	
Spare brake pads	
Spare derailleur hanger	
Any special tools or spare parts	
Lights (front and back)	
Charger for electronic gears	
Heart rate chest strap	
Cycling computer & charger	
Mobile phone & charger, adaptor	
Cycling helmet	
Water bottles (2)	
Base layer short sleeve	
Cycling jerseys short sleeve	
Cycling shorts	
Cycling socks	
Cycling Gloves (summer)	
Cycling Gloves (long, waterproof)	

ITEM	CHECK
Arm warmers	
Leg warmers	
Warm waterproof jacket	
Lightweight rain jacket	
Windproof jacket	
Cycling sun glasses	
Cycling shoes (with spare cleats)	
Waterproof overshoes	
Chamois cream	
Sun cream	
Personal pharmaceutical items	
Insurance	
Medical certificate	
Day bag (for the van)	



## **Alpine Cols SAS**

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