



C2C: Whitehaven to Tynemouth/Sunderland

Introduction:

A beautiful, scenic and challenging cycling journey from Whitehaven to Tynemouth or Sunderland, cycling through the Lake District, Eden Valley and the North Pennines before dropping into Tynemouth or Sunderland. This is the original northern coast to coast cycle route, it is complete with mountain bike detours, challenging passes and the highest point on the cycle network. It is such a rewarding route with amazing views, pristine lakes, charming villages, ancient stone circles, great food and for those who enjoy it, great local beer. There are two end points, Sunderland and Tynemouth; we usually recommend Tynemouth because of the ride through Newcastle and the finish into Tynemouth but we can of course accommodate a finish into Sunderland. The C2C is 136 miles in long.

Details:

Duration: Generally between 2 and 6 days in length, but we can organise any length of tour including days of during the tour on request. We can also organise extra nights accommodation before the tour starts and when it ends.

Distance: 136 miles / 219 km

Included in tour:

- Bed and Breakfast in cycling friendly accommodation
- Daily luggage transfers
- Return transfer
- Extensive maps (paper and digital)
- Emergency contacts
- Meet and greet at the beginning of the tour including tour introduction with the chance to take a few photos before you leave.

- Supported tours are also available (please enquire)

Extras:

- Bike rental
- Electric bike
- Extra night(s) accommodation (before, during or after)
- Single room supplement

Date: Tours are available from March to October. Please let us know when you would like to travel.

Tour Highlights:

Spectacular views of the Lake District and the North Pennines.

Castlerigg Stone Circle and its surrounding 360° panoramic view.

Newcastle Quayside and its bridges and buildings

Blackhill, the highest point on the National Cycle Network

Hartside pass, its iconic cafe and its view back to the Lake District

Keswick and its relaxed Lake District lifestyle

Tynemouth and its priory for many reasons

Off-route and other pit stops:

There are many options en-route for diversions, especially for mountain bike users, all clearly marked on the map. There is another popular diversion, Wiggo's Way, which was developed to celebrate Bradley Wiggins winning the Tour of Britain and brings you through the Eden Valley.

Little Salkeld Watermill Cafe, organic goodies

Kirkstile Inn, 16th century inn nestled into the fells surrounding Loewswater, and a nice place for lunch/tea/coffee.

Turner Prize winning Tony Cragg's 'Terris Novalis' artwork on the trail near Cosett.

Sample 3 Day Self-guided Itinerary:

Day 1: Whitehaven to Greystoke: 48 miles / 77 km - 3115ft / 950 meters ascent

We get a lot of requests to organise their accommodation in Whitehaven the night before the tour starts, please ask for details. Meet in Whitehaven at your hotel or start point. Our rep will take your luggage, handover your bikes, if rented from us, maps and will give you a brief intro into the tour. They will be available to answer any of your questions and take a few 'before' photos for you before you head off into the rising sun (hopefully) towards and into the Lake District!

Day 2: Greystoke to Stanhope: 48 miles / 77 km - 4620ft / 1400 meters ascent

Leaving the Greystoke behind we head to Penrith and out of the Lake District and into the Eden Valley. We pass the iconic Hartside Pass and its cafe before heading into the North Pennines. After a few climbs, including one over the highest point on the NCN we finish the day off in Stanhope, County Durham.

Day 3: Stanhope to Tynemouth: 44 miles / 71 km - 1371ft / 420 meters ascent

Final day and final climb first thing out of Stanhope, and it's a long one. Once you get to Waskerly Way cycling path you have the hill beaten, from here it's down and flat to the river Tyne and basically flat through Newcastle to Tynemouth, and your destination

Clothing

The UK boasts some of the most spectacular scenery in the world and its diverse history is one of the main pulls for tourists. We can guarantee that you will experience this whilst on your cycling adventure. What we are unfortunately unable to guarantee is the weather, so we would advise to be prepared for all eventualities!

We have found that the best way to do this, is through layers and with a lightweight

waterproof on top. It might be a chilly day, but when climbing a hill for 30+ minutes, you will soon create your very own central heating system and will regret having to lug around a thick jumper!

In the colder weather, it is also advisable to wear warm footwear. Our bikes aren't fitted with pedal cleats, but a pair of good-grip shoes will do you well (if you are hiring bikes from and want to bring your own pedals, you are more than welcome but please let us know beforehand).

For update advice on the weather please consult the met office's forecast here <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/public/weather>.

Bikes

Our bikes are hybrid bikes with at least 24 gears. They are perfectly suited for cycling on country lanes, cycle paths, roads and trails. They're neither mountain bikes nor road bikes so we would advise against going off-piste at any point, or expecting to keep up with the peloton! All our bikes include a pannier, spare tube and repair equipment, a mini u-lock, a mini pump and lights. We can also supply electric bikes, please enquire. If you want to bring your own saddle or pedals you are more than welcome, please advise us beforehand.

The C2C is suitable for all bikes, there are some off-road sections which are only suitable for mountain bikes but these are optional diversions running beside regular routes suitable for all bikes. The route itself has many climbs, some very steep so if you are unsure of the challenge you would like you can always add on another day and make the daily distances shorter.

Accommodation

We take pride in the b&b accommodation we work with on our cycling tours, they are chosen for being cycling friendly, welcoming and comfortable, include a hearty breakfast and we get great feedback from our tourers on our choice of accommodation. The accommodation will also provide secure bike storage and some can provide a packed lunch if booked in advance.

Our bunkhouse accommodation for bunkhouse tours will also provide all of the above but will not include a breakfast, some do provide this service but will need to be booked with the property prior to or on arrival.

Fitness

Even our most leisurely tours will have some element of climbing so you will benefit from having done a sufficient amount of training prior to the departure. You will know yourself how far and how long you are able to cycle, so we hope that you have chosen a tour accordingly. You can allow yourself extra time by having an early start if needed, but please be mindful of daylight hours. All our bikes will be fitted with lights, but we would advise to try and finish the day's cycling before it gets dark.

And if a hill is too steep, walk the bike up! Having scaled the Rocky Mountains without ever being beaten by a 'hill', I have had to push a bike up a 200 metre long climb in Shropshire, and there's no shame in it!

Food

A cyclist's best friend. We would suggest stocking up on snacks whenever you get a chance. There is nothing worse than peddling on empty, so bananas, cereal bars, biscuits (etc.) could provide that much needed extra bit of energy. Most of the towns and villages will have at least one cafe or pub for lunch/tea/coffee breaks; on the maps we supply each town or village with a pub or cafe is clearly marked with a glass or cup.

Roads and Route

Parts of our tours will take place on roads and you will be sharing that road with cars. We ask you to be mindful in this case. For example: Signal when you're changing lanes or turning corners and don't cycle more than two abreast. If you're unsure of the laws of the land in regards to cycling, you can brush up on your knowledge here: . <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/rules-for-cyclists-59-to-82>

The C2C route itself is very clearly signposted (thank you very much Sustrans), this along with the maps both paper and digital we provide you with allow for a very comfortable orientation on this coast to coast ride.

Transfer

Each tour includes a transfer from the end of the tour for you, your bike and luggage, back to the start of the tour. It is possible to change this to another destination, to have this at the start of the year or to have a transfer at the start and finish (i.e. a door to door transfer) please enquire if needed

Further Questions

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any other questions on the route or the tour. You can contact us on the following:

Call us at 01524840072

Email us on info@openroadopenskies.co.uk

Tweet us @oroskies

Facebook us www.facebook.com/oroskies/

We also have an FAQ page for you to look through <http://www.openroadopenskies.co.uk/info/faqs>

Enjoyment

We want you to enjoy this adventure. It is, after all, a holiday. Relax, enjoy the ride, take in the country, stop off at areas of interest, chat to the locals and, most importantly, go at your own pace!

May the wind be at your back!