



E-BIKE CYCLING TOURS



YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE

RAW TRAVEL
ICONIC WALKS WORLDWIDE



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the exciting world of e-biking!

As passionate travellers and cyclists, we'd love you to experience the magic of exploring some of the world's iconic trails on two wheels – with a boost!

If you are used to riding a conventional bike, e-bikes are a novel and excellent way to cycle long distances through stunning landscapes, without the same level of exertion while enjoying all the same memorable cultural and foodie experiences.

At RAW, we have an ever-growing number of e-bike holidays. You can cruise along the bike paths of the Loire Valley or Danube, pedal around Puglia in southern Italy, see Slovenia from the saddle, ride a section of Spain's iconic Camino de Santiago, or coast through the pristine wilderness of New Zealand.

The destinations we have chosen are very cycle-friendly and offer many fascinating places to stop, explore and eat along the way. Each morning you simply slot your recharged batteries back into your bike and pedal off.

These self-guided trips give you the flexibility to explore at your own pace. While our e-bike holidays make the trails accessible to a broader range of fitness levels, you still require some cycling experience and training.

Having hiked and biked our way around the world (*we used to be predominately a cycling company back in the 2000s!*) we can expertly guide you through everything you need to know for a successful and enjoyable e-cycling trip.

Hop on and let's start this adventure!

RAW Travel Team



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“ On e-bikes, hills are a breeze
and the modest distances each
day leave energy for exploring
after your ride is done. ”

Jason Williams

Cycling Holiday Specialist



E-BIKES – THE BASICS

If you are new to e-bikes here are the basics you should know:

- E-bikes simply make cycling much easier. If you can ride a regular bike you can ride an ebike. An e-bike makes hills a breeze and allows you to ride further as you won't need to put as much effort into pushing the pedals.
- E-bikes are pedal assist. This means the built-in motor will assist you. E-bikes are not motorbikes, you still have to pedal!
- There are multiple levels of assistance available. You can select the relevant level to help you ride for how you feel and the terrain covered. Generally, use the higher levels of assist on the uphill.
- Battery life is a consideration but for the distances ridden on the tours we offer you should never have any issues with running out of battery. Just remember to fully recharge every night.
- You still need to know how to ride a bike but you don't need the higher levels of fitness required if riding a regular bike. So a bit of training on any type of bike before your tour will make your holiday more enjoyable.
- E-bikes are much heavier than regular bikes so they do feel different but once you are up and riding the weight is not as noticeable.



[Watch our video for a quick run-through of the e-bikes we use in France's Loire Valley.](#)



*E-bikes are a joy to ride
and have opened up cycling
again to many people.*



GENERAL QUESTIONS

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO RIDE AN E-BIKE?

E-bikes make it far easier to cycle long distances with assistance from electric motors (referred to as 'Pedelec bikes'). They are a joy to ride and have opened up cycling again to many people. They are not electric motorbikes though and don't have a throttle – you still have to pedal and get a workout!

You ride an e-bike as you'd ride a regular bike. You'll still be pedalling, changing gears, and braking – the main difference is that there is assistance from the motor at speeds under 25km/h, and that level can be varied with the touch of a button.

You still have to put physical effort in, but less so than with a regular bike, and you can ride at a relaxed and enjoyable pace.

You can choose between different levels of assistance: you may want light assistance on a flat section, none on a downward slope, and the highest assistance going up steep hills. Being battery-powered, there is no significant motor noise.

The display panel shows your speed, distance, and battery life along with other useful statistics, depending on the exact model.

If you are new to e-bikes, start slowly with the e-bike in the lowest level of power assistance. Increase the power once you get going and get a feel for it. Begin with short rides to get used to the e-bike's weight and balance, and practice making smooth and controlled turns.

CAN A NON-CYCLIST RIDE AN E-BIKE?

In essence, e-bikes make cycling accessible to a very broad range of people and have proven quite revolutionary in encouraging people to ride. However, that does not mean you should attempt a multi-day cycling trip if you are a non-cyclist who's never ridden bikes. We strongly advise against this – the trails in Europe are not the place to learn to ride a bike for the first time or an e-bike. If you are new to e-bikes, or have not ridden for a long time then opt for tours with flatter terrain.



“*E-bikes are comfortable and make for a relaxing ride. You can traverse the stunning countryside and stop when something takes your fancy.*”

Mel Reynolds

Co-owner, RAW Travel



DO I NEED TO TRAIN?

E-bikes are most suitable for people who are already cyclists and have basic confidence riding a bike on and off sealed roads. Many cyclists really enjoy the assistance offered by an e-bike, and for people who may not be confident in their ability to ride longer distances day after day, they are an excellent choice. They are also great levellers and allow people who may not be as fit or experienced as their travelling partners to keep up with them. Though you shouldn't be complacent; you still need to train and get your general fitness and cycling skills up if you are contemplating a multi-day cycling trip (the same advice holds true for walks or other physical activities after all).

WHAT DAILY DISTANCES WILL I BE RIDING ON AN E-BIKE?

The average daily distance on our cycling tours is 30–45km a day. (Riding longer than 50km without experience can become uncomfortable as you are not used to the longer hours required on a bike.) Wherever possible, we generally aim to keep distances under 50km to allow you time to stop along the way to take in the views and local sights, have a snooze or leisurely lunch in the midday sun and connect with the region in which you are cycling. You will likely come across some lovely cafes and bike stops that cater specifically to cyclists, and offer delicious meals, snacks and cakes. This is all part of the pleasure of an e-biking holiday!

HOW MUCH DOES AN E-BIKE WEIGH?

E-bikes are significantly heavier (around 25–30kg) than a normal bike because of the motor and battery. E-bikes can be difficult to carry and lift. Unless you are quite strong, you will need assistance to lift the bike upstairs or over an obstacle. If two or more of you are riding together then you just help each other, otherwise you can try asking a passerby for help.



“ Good e-bikes offer an accessible and enjoyable adventure. Add wonderful picnics and relaxed summer evenings and you have a dream holiday! ”

Dave Reynolds

Founder, RAW Travel



PREPARATION & EQUIPMENT

HOW DO I GET MY E-BIKE?

You'll have your high-quality e-bike delivered to your hotel the day before you start cycling or you'll pick it up from a nominated bike shop at your start point.

In some countries, the bikes will be delivered flat-packed in a box, so some basic quick assembly is required; this is not a concern for most travellers, especially those experienced with cycling. It means turning and tightening handlebars, screwing in pedals and the seat post etc. In some destinations you may pick your bike up ready to ride from a local bike shop – it varies by location.

Speak to us if you are apprehensive about assembling your own bike. We may be able to arrange for the bike to be delivered to a local bicycle shop so they can assemble it for you. In this case, you would need to pick up your bike from their location on a business day during working hours.

After you have finished your cycling trip, the bike will usually be picked up from your hotel or you will be advised to deliver it to a nearby location that day. Your bike does not need to be dismantled.

WHAT TYPE OF E-BIKES ARE SUPPLIED?

We use high-quality all-terrain e-bikes, with a 500 or 750Wh battery that makes them ideal for extended rides. Most often they come with a 'step through' frame rather than a crossbar, though some of our bikes in Spain / Portugal may have a crossbar. The bike motor will assist you up to 25km/h, which is the legal limitation for a Pedelec motor. The display controller will provide you with all the stats and information you need.

Bike frames come in different sizes – small, medium and large. The e-bikes can have 7 to 9 gears with 4 assistance modes (see more info below), comfortable broad padded seats, puncture-resistant tyres, non-technical pedals and roomy panniers – spacious enough to load up with pastries, cheeses, bread, a picnic rug and whatever else you need for the day. If you are cycling through France, take or purchase a bottle opener – wine in France for the most part is corked! Bring your own basic picnic supplies and a lightweight throw if that's what you're planning.



WHAT ITEMS COME WITH AN E-BIKE?

E-bikes come with everything you need to get you on the road, except for a bike helmet, which in most locations you will need to bring, or it can be supplied. You will be advised of this pre-departure.

We do not have a uniform fleet of bikes across different destinations. The brands, style and exact features will vary from country to country, though commonly e-bikes have the following features:

- small handlebar bag with map case
- tool kit
- puncture kit and pump
- sturdy combination locks
- lights
- bell
- water-bottle holder
- rear pannier

The bikes are set up to house a mobile phone or map book in the waterproof map case, but you may wish to purchase an additional phone mount. It's been our lived experience that you can't always see a phone screen if the sun is reflecting strongly off the map case or obscured by rain and then you have to frequently stop and get your phone out, which is a nuisance. We highly recommend purchasing [an inexpensive and sturdy mount](#) and trying it out on a bike before you go. This could potentially save you a lot of hassle on the trail and is easy to use.

HOW DO I SELECT THE RIGHT RIDING MODE ON AN E-BIKE?

E-bikes mostly have 4 assistance modes, and it's easy to switch between them with your handlebar controls. Each mode uses progressively higher levels of assistance and therefore more battery life.

Eco mode is the gentlest and will save the most battery capacity and give you the longest battery range, but you have to pedal more strongly yourself.

Tour is a medium mode that is best suited for a day's riding with a medium level of assistance and adequate battery range for the day.

Sport or Sprint is a higher level of assistance and good for off-road situations or city commutes where you might need a quick burst of power to get past traffic or up a short incline. You wouldn't ride all day in this mode though to conserve battery.

Turbo is the highest mode of power where you get a full boost of assistance but your battery won't last all day in this mode. You will particularly enjoy Turbo when going uphill, which is its most appropriate use.

If you don't want to make any individual settings while riding, on selected bikes there may be an auto mode, which automatically adjusts the assistance to the route you are covering – though this is not a common feature across all bikes.





*Discovering new paths
and hidden gems is
effortless on an e-bike
– it's adventuring made easy.*

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR A CYCLING TRIP?

Consecutive days in the saddle may give you tired legs, a sore bum, possibly some slight wrist pain, and perhaps a bit of chafing, which is all normal on a multi-day e-bike trip, even when there is power behind the machine. The more used you are to cycling the less chance you will notice these symptoms. If you don't cycle regularly, think about how your body will stand up to multiple days on an e-bike.

Prepare well in advance. The main thing to aim for is an appropriate level of fitness and the ability to cover the daily distances on the cycling trip you have opted for. On all our trips, you'll find details of how many kilometres you'll cycle every day (based on a leisurely pace) as well as the terrain and elevation.

If you don't have a lot of experience cycling long-distance and for several hours in one day, get your body used to being in the saddle.

To build endurance, gradually increase the distance and difficulty of your rides. Ride on different surfaces to get used to the varied conditions you might encounter. Consistency is key – aim for regular rides, incorporating both flat and hilly terrain.

Also incorporate exercises that strengthen your legs, core, and upper body. Stretch regularly to improve flexibility and reduce the risk of injury. Allow time for rest and recovery between rides.

To avoid any unnecessary anxiety about balance or battery range, get some experience riding an e-bike before you travel.

For more training advice, you can always contact your local cycling club or meet-up group.



E-bikes are an excellent way to cycle long distances through stunning landscapes, without the same level of exertion.



CYCLING GEAR

WHAT KIND OF CLOTHING DO I NEED?

You can wear a mix of regular clothes and cycling kit, but you'll find that cycling clothes are a lot more comfortable on long/hot days. Many clothing items used for hiking cross over well for use while cycling.

Tops that are moisture-wicking and breathable are the best choice, along with padded cycling shorts. These basics will make a big difference on long rides. Bring a few of each. You can rinse them at the end of the day to allow enough time for drying overnight.

Opt for moisture-wicking socks to keep your feet dry and comfortable. Gloves will enhance your grip and control, especially on long rides, and can help reduce hand fatigue. Arm warmers and leg warmers are also a good idea.

Also pack a windproof/rainproof jacket, buff/neck gaiter, sunglasses, water bottles and a first-aid kit.

DO I NEED SPECIAL CYCLING SHOES?

E-bikes come with flat pedals, so you don't need clip-on cycling shoes. We recommend wearing trainers (sneakers) or outdoor trainers – the thicker/sturdier the sole, the more comfortable. During each ride, you'll be stopping for lunch or to explore a village or historic site, so you'll be more comfortable walking around in trainers or walking shoes.

If you prefer riding in clip-in pedals and shoes you can always bring your own pedals and swap out the ones provided, changing them back again at the end of your trip.

We will send you more details about gear after you book your trip.

DO I NEED TO WEAR A HELMET? IS ONE PROVIDED?

Wearing a helmet while cycling is always a requirement of travelling with tour operators, even if it may not be a legal requirement in that specific country. The provision of helmets varies according to rental locations. In some countries (for both hygiene and sizing factors) rental helmets are not provided with bikes. But in other locations, there are rental helmets to use and your information will state which is the case.

If not stated as an inclusion then be sure to take your own cycling helmet with you. Alternatively, purchase a helmet when you arrive prior to commencing your trip. Helmets are readily available in large sports stores and in specialised bike stores.

See more information below about safety and regulations.



RECHARGING YOUR E-BIKE

HOW LONG WILL AN E-BIKE BATTERY LAST?

The answer to this can vary according to a number of factors.

The weight of the rider and any gear they are carrying, the distance travelled and type of terrain, the level of assistance used throughout the ride, and the capacity of the battery itself.

E-bike batteries are generally capable of doing two full-day rides on moderate terrain on low to medium assistance.

Typically, you will have no trouble making the battery last for each day's stage, provided you are staying aware and varying the level of assistance as required. The battery capacity on our bikes is perfectly adequate for the distances covered on our tours.

On large or long climbs you will use assistance to reach the summit, but you can freewheel down the long descents without needing any battery assistance at all.

Best practice is to recharge the battery after each day's ride so that you are assured of adequate range the following day and don't have to be concerned about running short. If your bike does run out of battery you can continue to ride the bike. On flat terrain, it's no issue but as soon as you hit a hill or incline you will really notice the extra weight of the bike.





Many clothing items used for hiking cross over well for use while cycling.

HOW DO I RECHARGE AN E-BIKE BATTERY?

You have a choice to either charge the bike where you store it overnight (like a garage with an electricity socket) or take the battery up to your room for charging. Each e-bike comes with a key that enables you to unlock and remove the battery, and also a charging cable, which you carry with you on the bike. You can charge the battery on the bike in place by plugging in the cable to the bike and the other end to an available socket or remove the battery and charge it in your room overnight. Plug one end into a mains power point and the other into a socket on the bike / or the removed battery.

Typically, it takes about 4 hours to get a full charge. There are indicator lights on the battery itself. Your handlebar display tells you how much charge you have in the battery when riding it or when recharging it in place.

If you're short on time, even a partial charge can provide a significant boost.

Hotels, particularly in Europe, are well used to riders with e-bikes. They can advise you where to charge and securely store the bike each evening, and you can either recharge the battery in the storage area if that's suitable or detach it and take it to your room. There is no additional charge from the hotel for this electricity used.

NAVIGATION

HOW DO I NAVIGATE WHILE RIDING AN E-BIKE?

Finding your way along the trails has become a lot easier with our exclusive navigation app but you should still be prepared to use a mixture of wayfinding with road and trail signs, our app and a backup paper map for the best results each day. The app shows your location in real-time without any internet connection needed and is best for confirming you're still on the correct trail if you have any doubts.

The app has many great features, including local weather forecasts, the location of each night's accommodation, safety information, videos, and a unique audio feature that can tell you about places and points of interest as you approach them on the trail.

The ease of navigation can be different from trip to trip depending on how many turn-offs are needed or whether the trail is relatively straight and easy to discern. It's not uncommon to overshoot a turn-off in the course of a day's ride but you can quickly recover by checking your position on the app and seeing whether you are still on the marked route. Some routes are very well signed and riders can navigate just using the signage, checking now and again on their app as a backup. Some common sense and basic route-finding skill is needed with every form of independent travel, and cycling trips are no different!



E-bikes come with everything you need to get you on the road, except for a bike helmet.



If you decide to make a side trip off your designated route you just need a bit of navigational 'know-how' and follow directions in Google Maps, road signs or a paper map.

The e-bikes are set up to house a smartphone in the handlebar bag, but we recommend purchasing a handlebar mount which makes seeing your phone easier.

👉 [Here is another example](#) of an inexpensive but good solution.

Navigating while riding in traffic will likely pose the biggest challenge as you come through the occasional town or city. It's best to stop and check your phone or map while stationary rather than lose focus on a road as you stare at the phone or map.

WHAT ABOUT SUN GLARE AND RAIN?

Sometimes the sun will come in at the wrong angle while cycling, making it difficult to see the screen. If you need to check your location, it's best to simply pull over and shade the screen. Sensitive touch screens are useless in the rain. Use the waterproof map case (handlebar bag) for your smartphone to continue using it as normal.

CAN I USE GLOVES ON A TOUCHSCREEN?

Using the touch screen on your smartphone can be more difficult if you are wearing full-finger cycling gloves, so fingerless are the better choice especially in warm weather. Here are some solutions:

- Enable the 'high touch sensitivity function' on your device
- Wear fingerless gloves
- Buy bike gloves that are touch-screen compatible
- Apply a product like Nanotips – a liquid that can be applied to the finger of any glove to make it compatible with touchscreen devices



SAFETY & REGULATIONS

WHAT SAFETY PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE?

When you are on a bike, you are more exposed to cold. You may encounter slippery, muddy conditions, and you have less control over rough terrain.

You will be often sharing paths with other cyclists and walkers – always use your provided bell as a courtesy to let others know you are approaching or call out.

Be mindful of which side of the road or trail you will be riding on and constantly remind yourself if it is the opposite side from the side you ride on at home. It is easy to start riding on the wrong side of the road when starting out on a road that is clear of other road users!

Riding on roads and in traffic poses more risks though drivers in Europe are generally very considerate of cyclists and very patient. You'll feel a lot safer riding here than in Australia. There is more potential for injury in the event of a fall from a moving bicycle rather than while walking.

ARE THERE SPEED LIMITS AND OTHER LAWS?

Cyclists obey the same road signs as motorists. Regarding the electric motor, regulations vary by country but generally include a 25 km/h limit on power assist, that doesn't mean you are limited to riding at 25km/h though, you just do it under your own steam after that speed! (You will go faster than this when freewheeling down long descents without assistance.)

Familiarise yourself with any basic cycling rules of the country you are visiting. At some point, you're likely to end up riding in traffic. Know what you can and can't do legally. Each country has its own laws, and some are more stringent when it comes to riding two abreast, wearing helmets, wearing headphones, and even alcohol limits. (An easy rule of thumb: If you've drunk too much to drive a car then don't consider riding a bike!)






We have an ever-growing number of e-bike holidays and the destinations we have chosen are very cycle-friendly.

CAN I TRAVEL WITH AN E-BIKE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN EUROPE?

Generally speaking, cycling is very well supported in Europe and trains often accept bikes but with conditions. You may for instance have to make a reservation on some popular routes but not on others. Policies vary by country and mode of transport. Some trains and buses definitely allow e-bikes, but it's best to check in advance.

SHOULD I KNOW HOW TO REPAIR THE BIKE?

Yes. You must know how to do basic bike maintenance when you are out on the trail, including repairing a puncture and fixing a slipped bike chain. Check out this video that demonstrates  [how to repair a bike puncture](#).

WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAVE A MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM WITH THE BIKE?

The bikes are supplied in excellent condition and are serviced between each trip and replaced each year. There are partner service centres along the routes, and if your bike requires attention, our support staff on the ground will point you to the nearest location. If you have any significant problems that prevent you from doing this, you can catch a taxi with your bike and take it to the nearest repair centre.

CAN AN ELECTRIC BIKE GO THROUGH WATER?

Shallow water yes, though submersion in water can damage the electrical components of the e-bike and pose a safety risk. While some electric bikes may have water-resistant or waterproof features to handle light rain or wet conditions, it is important to avoid riding through deep water, such as a flooded river.

DOES TRAVEL INSURANCE COVER E-BIKES?

Purchasing the right travel insurance for your cycling trip is essential. Before you travel be sure to check with your chosen travel insurance provider that you will be fully covered while cycling/e-biking, and also that you will be covered for other important aspects including theft, damage, medical expenses and more.



MISCELLANEOUS

HOW MUCH DOES A SELF-GUIDED E-BIKE TRIP COST?

The cost of our e-bike trips depends on the location, duration, accommodation, and additional services. See the individual cycling itineraries on our website for full details.

ARE SELF-GUIDED E-BIKE TRIPS SUITABLE FOR SOLO TRAVELLERS?

Yes. We welcome bookings for solo travellers. Keep in mind that you will need to be self-sufficient in terms of navigation and repairs. Plus, e-bikes are significantly heavier than conventional bikes because of the motor and battery, which means that unless you are quite strong, they can be difficult to carry upstairs or over an obstacle. If you are not able to manage this yourself, you will need to rely on finding someone to assist you. As with our walking trips, if you are a solo traveller you will need to pay the single supplement. Please refer to individual cycling trips for more details.

ARE LUGGAGE TRANSFERS INCLUDED ON SELF-GUIDED CYCLING TRIPS?

Yes. Each day your main luggage will be transferred to the next hotel so you can keep your weight on the bike light and just take what you need for the day. The bikes come with panniers, which attach to the side of your bike and are perfect for storing warm clothing, food and any essential items you'll need for that day's ride.

Much like our walking tours, each evening you'll be booked into excellent accommodation, hand-picked for its character and location.

RAW TRAVEL
ICONIC WALKS WORLDWIDE

Certified

