

# FURTHER INFORMATION



## BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE

Join our team and ride Brussels to Cologne for a truly inspirational experience; you'll make friends for life, push yourself beyond your limits but most of all make memories you'll cherish for a lifetime.

This exciting ride will see us cover approximately 147 miles over 2 days through picturesque countryside incorporating an overnight stop in Aachen, known as "Spa of Kings".

Exceptional support awaits – from our mechanics through to catering. Come and see why we are the people's favourite!

“BELIEVE YOU CAN”



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



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## INTRODUCTION

Taking part in one of our challenges undoubtedly requires commitment, determination and, above all, a positive attitude from the outset. From the moment you sign up there are steps in place to ensure that you have the correct level of support and help throughout the entire journey not just on the challenge itself. Each participant should approach the challenge with an open mind and prepare to be adaptable throughout. Whilst thousands of hours of work will have gone into the preparation across all of our challenges, the itineraries are complex and things can often need to change on the ground, therefore they are strictly subject to change including the accommodation details noted within this document and the facilities available.

This document will provide you with challenge and route information along with approximate timings for each day. It is hoped this will give you an insight into what you can expect whilst on this awesome challenge and help you to prepare further

If you have any other questions which are not answered in this document, about the challenge you are about to embark upon, please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01244 676454 or email [customer.care@globaladventurechallenges.com](mailto:customer.care@globaladventurechallenges.com).

## FINANCIAL PROTECTION

By travelling with Global Adventure Challenges you are protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) under our ATOL licence number 6506.

When you buy an ATOL protected flight inclusive Overseas Challenge from us you will receive an ATOL Certificate. This lists what is financially protected, where you can get information on what this means for you and who to contact if things go wrong.

The CAA are the UK's specialist aviation regulator. They are a public corporation, established by Parliament in 1972.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## ABOUT GLOBAL ADVENTURE CHALLENGES

Global Adventure Challenges have been organising world-wide charity challenge events and adventures since the year 2000. Since we began organising challenge events we have grown and developed very steadily – we believe that our charity partners, participants and corporate organisations – basically, our customer base – are the best form of advertising. Word of mouth, they say, is the best form of marketing and we believe this also.

Our challenges have helped raise well in excess of £15 million for a wide range of charities located throughout both the UK and overseas. Over the years, we have taken tens of thousands of people on exciting challenges all over the world, helping them realise their dreams and fulfil lifetime ambitions. Our challenge events are “life-changing...” and these are the words of our participants, not ours!

We are extremely proud of the events we organise and we are here to give you a memorable lifetime experience. Without doubt our success lies in the dedicated team we have working both in the office, and out in the field.

Our passion for adventure travel and pushing your ‘comfort zone’, combined with extensive fundraising event experience, are what makes us different from

other operators. We believe that from the moment you enquire, you will be embarking on a journey that you will remember forever.

Travelling with Global Adventure Challenges is an enjoyable and satisfying way to show your commitment to fantastic charitable causes. Come and be part of our success! We are taking more and more individuals away on exciting challenge events every year... join them... join us!

## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

We recognise our responsibility to the places we visit, and also to local people. We believe that we need to preserve and respect the locations in which our challenges take place, in order for future generations to have the same fantastic experience as you. We are passionate about the environment and as a participant of Global Adventure Challenges it is expected that you share our passion and follow the guidelines below:

### Respect other people

- Be courteous to the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors.
- Keep noise to a minimum, especially in areas near dwellings.
- Keep to the marked route and do not stray onto private property.

- Leave gates and property as you find them.

### Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit.
- Take your litter home including fruit peelings.
- Pick up any litter that you see along the route and dispose of it at the next checkpoint.
- Do not disturb wildlife or livestock.

## PASSPORT

Passports are required for both the outward journey and the return journey. Please ensure that your passport is in good condition as you may be refused entry if it is damaged in any way.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## INSURANCE

### Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend you take out comprehensive travel insurance at the earliest opportunity. A comprehensive travel insurance policy is available through Global Adventure Challenges, details of how to apply are given in your welcome letter.

If you are opting to use your own personal travel insurance then details of your policy should be sent to us. Please be aware that we will not vet or check your own personal travel insurance policy details. Therefore you and you alone are responsible for ensuring that you have adequate personal travel insurance with protection for the full duration of the challenge in respect to medical expenses, injury, death, repatriation, cancellation and curtailment. You should also make sure there are no exclusion clauses limiting protection for the type of activities included in the challenge.

Please be aware that the European Health Insurance Card does not cover travel delays, loss of possessions or repatriation to the UK in the case of an accident, therefore it is not a replacement for your travel insurance.

### Bike Insurance

It may be worth considering bike insurance for whilst you are on the challenge. Please be aware that the travel insurance through Global Adventure Challenges does not cover your bike.

## CHALLENGE INFORMATION

- The currency that is used in Belgium and Germany is the Euro.
- Dutch is spoken in Belgium and German in Germany.
- The time in Belgium and Germany is GMT + 1 hour.
- The climate and temperature is very similar to the South East of England – i.e. it can rain at any time!
- Brussels is a major trader of beer, waffles and chocolate. There are more than 800 brands of beer on sale in Brussels.
- In Belgium there is a population of approximately 11.35 million people, and just over 1 million of these live in the capital city, Brussels.
- Building of the Cologne Cathedral commenced in 1248 and was finished in 1880, 632 years later.
- Cologne has a population of approximately 1 million, the whole population of Germany is over 82 million.
- It is safe to drink water from the taps in Belgium and Germany.

## COUNTRY INFORMATION

### Useful Dutch Phrases

- Hallo – hello.
- Alsjeblieft – please.
- Dank je - thank you.
- Spreek u Engels? – do you speak English?

### Useful German Phrases

- Hallo – hello.
- Bitte – please.
- Danke - thank you.
- Sprichst du Englisch? – do you speak English?

### Costs

- The average price for a beer or coffee is more expensive in Belgium and Germany than in the UK and does depend on location.
- The average cost for a small beer (generally ½ pint) in Aachen is 3€ - 4€.
- The average cost for a small beer in Brussels or Cologne is 5€ - 7€.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## WEATHER

Although it is impossible to predict in advance what the weather will be like for any particular day, it is hoped that you are prepared for all types of conditions. In the welcome pack you will find a detailed kit list, please ensure that you bring all of the items marked as 'Mandatory'.

Before the start of the challenge the Event Manager will check the weather forecast and make a final decision about the appropriateness of the route to be taken.

Month	City	Average Temp °C		Average Wind Speed (mph)
		Min	Max	
May	<i>Brussels</i>	8	17	8
	<i>Cologne</i>	9	18	9
June	<i>Brussels</i>	11	19	10
	<i>Cologne</i>	12	21	11

The temperatures and wind speeds stated above are averages taken over a number of years and will differ between locations.

## BIKE CARE DURING YOUR CHALLENGE

Although there will be bike mechanics on the challenge, there can sometimes be a long wait for them to get to you, so here are some really simple tasks that you ideally need to know how to complete before you start the challenge:

- Change an inner tube/tyre
- Inflate your tyres to the correct pressure
- Grease your gears and chain

These will ensure you can fix your own bike and get back on the road much faster. The best way to learn is either to be taught by someone or look up the task on the internet; there are some great tutorials available. Please ensure you take your bike for a full service before the challenge!

## MECHANICAL SUPPORT

The skills of our bike mechanics are usually in high demand during our challenges. As mentioned in the Bike Care section being able to complete basic repairs or punctures yourself really makes a difference to how quickly you can get going again.

During the challenge, bike mechanics are on call to assist you and they will also be available to fine tune your bike each evening at the hotel, time permitting. We do carry bike spares however these are not high specification parts and are supplied to allow you to be able to complete the challenge. If you do require specialist components for your bike then you will need to bring them with you. If you cannot carry them with you on your bike then they will need to remain in your luggage and can be accessed on arrival at each night's hotel.

Any spares which we supply you with will be on a cost basis which is payable to the mechanic in pounds sterling. Please ensure you carry sufficient funds with you for this eventuality.

If the mechanic is unable to fix your bike on the side of the road (i.e. if it is a serious problem) we will provide you with a spare bike, that we carry, to enable you to get to the accommodation. When the bike mechanic is back at the accommodation, they will try to get your own bike fixed for the following day.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## PERSONAL CARE

### First Aid

Global Adventure Challenges will provide first aid cover during the challenge. All Global Adventure Challenges first aiders are 16 hour Outdoor First Aid qualified.

Although we do provide first aid, we also require that all participants bring their own personal first aid kits so that individuals can deal with minor issues themselves. It is also recommended that participants bring with them any prescription medication along with a personal supply of over the counter medication.

### Health and Hygiene

Hygiene is very important to avoid stomach upsets – wash hands wherever possible, especially before eating, by using antibacterial hand gel.

Participants who are travelling out of the UK must have and carry their EHIC (European Health Insurance Card – the replacement of E111) with them for the duration of the challenge. Application for the card, if you have not already got one, is free at [www.ehic.org.uk](http://www.ehic.org.uk).

## CHALLENGE GRADING

Our challenges are graded 1 (Challenging), 2 (Tough) or 3 (Extreme). This challenge is graded at 1 (Challenging).

Each of our challenge events are designed to be achievable by most individuals, providing you are prepared to put the effort into training. You do not need to be a professional athlete or ‘super fit’, however, the fitter you are the more you will enjoy the challenge!

Please keep in mind that these guidelines are to give you an insight into the difficulty level associated with the challenge. You may find that an event rated ‘Challenging’, could have a ‘Tough’ day, or we may find that a ‘Tough’ challenge, may have a ‘Challenging’ day.

### CHALLENGING

A ‘Challenging’ cycle requires a good level of fitness and they usually involve undulating terrain and relatively long cycling days. Hotels are used but these are not luxury hotels and are very basic.

## DIFFICULTY & TERRAIN

You will be cycling for 2 consecutive days covering a total distance of approx. 147 miles. We will cycle on varied terrain which is mostly tarmacked roads but at times will be testing with roadside debris, tram lines and cobble stones.

This itinerary has been designed to maximise your chances of success, it is worth remembering it is not a race and one top tip you should follow is to cycle at a steady pace.

Our policy is to encourage and support as many people as possible to take part in our challenges. But they may not be suitable for all people due to restriction posed by limitation in mobility, physical or cognitive disability, pregnancy or other various medical conditions.

Global Adventure Challenges reserves the right to refuse a booking if we feel unable to accommodate the particular needs of the person(s) concerned. If you have any doubts regarding your suitability for your challenge please contact our office immediately to speak to one of the team



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## NAVIGATION

When you register on the day, you will be supplied with a route guide in your cycling pack. It is important that you carry this with you each day so you can regularly check it whilst on the route.

### Route Marking

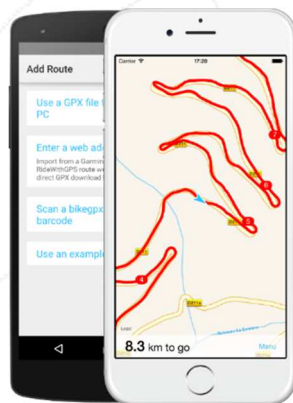
The route will be clearly marked with florescent arrows. These and your route guide will help you to navigate your way along the route.



## GPX'S

If you have a Garmin, bike computer or a GPX viewer app please contact the office as we can provide you with the GPX files for each day. GPX's will only be made available 2 weeks prior to departure to ensure that only the most accurate versions of the route are provided for the event.

All distances shown are approximate and are based on our mapping software, Memory Map. These may differ slightly to other software packages and data recorded on GPS devices.



## TRAFFIC

Traffic in Brussels is a little daunting to the uninitiated – cars, motorbikes, bicycles and pedestrians just seem to swarm about each other with no 'rhyme or reason'; so stick together and go with the flow!

The England and Wales Highway Code is similar to the Highway Code in Europe. The Highway Code applies to vehicles, cyclists, horses, pedestrians etc. But there are some rules that are dedicated to cyclists. Please read these rules as they will help you to be safe on the road.

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/rules-for-cyclists-59-to-82/overview-59-to-71> to find the rules that are for cyclists.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## START & REGISTRATION

On day 1 you will meet at the Amex stadium, where there will be an event registration desk located within the car park between 11:30am and 12:30pm.

As part of registration you will be given your cycling pack which contains route information and emergency procedures, along with an armband that must be worn during the challenge. You will be asked to re-confirm details such as contact number and next of kin details to ensure these are still accurate. During registration you will be advised of when the event briefing will take place and what time the group will start cycling and you will provide the event crew with your bike to be loaded into our support vehicles.

Once the group have all arrived, you will be transferred to St Pancras where you will catch the Eurostar to Brussels, the starting point of your cycle to Cologne.

Upon arrival in Brussels you will walk the small distance to your hotel for the evening, ready for the following morning.

## TRANSFERS

**Outward Travel:** – You will be responsible for making your own way to the Amex Stadium where you will be transferred to St Pancras to catch an evening train to Brussels.

**Return Travel:** At the end of your challenge you will be transported to Dusseldorf airport where you will board a flight to London Heathrow. Upon arrival at Heathrow, you will be transported back to the Amex Stadium to collect your bike and make your onward journey home.

Further information regarding exact flight times will be sent to you in the lead up to your challenge, but you can expect to land back in the UK during the evening.

## BIKE TRANSFERS

Upon arrival at Amex Stadium/Cologne, bikes will be loaded systematically into our support vehicles using a large amount of packing blankets for protection. It is essential that you remove any valuables including bike computers as they can sometimes fall off when being loaded on to the vehicles.

Please note that whilst the utmost care and attention is taken, Global Adventure Challenges cannot be held responsible for any damage incurred whilst bikes are being transported back to the UK.





# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## OTHER COSTS THAT YOU NEED TO BUDGET FOR

Below are some approximate costs for other expenditure you may incur for the challenge:

Item	Approx. cost
Travel insurance	£37*
Spending money	£150 - £200
Hotels the night before and after your challenge.	£80 - £100 per night

How much spending money you will need usually depends on how many presents and souvenirs you want to bring home!

\*if you take out the single trip policy through Global Adventure Challenges.

## FOOD, WATER & REFRESHMENT STOPS

Most dietary requirements can be catered for as long as we know in advance, so please ensure you contact the Customer Care team.

Plenty of food and snacks will be available to you during the trip, however, we suggest you bring along plenty of your own favourite snacks to give you an extra boost when you find the going tough.

### Breakfast

A continental style breakfast will be served in the hotel prior to setting off, which will most likely consist of: Croissants, breads, meats and cheeses

### Lunch

Lunch will be open air buffets which consists of pasta, breads, meats, cheeses and something sweet for dessert. The exact menu does depend on the size of the group and if the group is small we may eat in local cafés/restaurants en-route.

Open air buffet lunch: Fresh cooked pasta dish, a side potato dish, selection of French meats and cheeses and cakes/tarts.

Cafés: Pasta or rice dish.

### Dinner

Dinner will either be in the hotel or in a local restaurant. An example menu is:

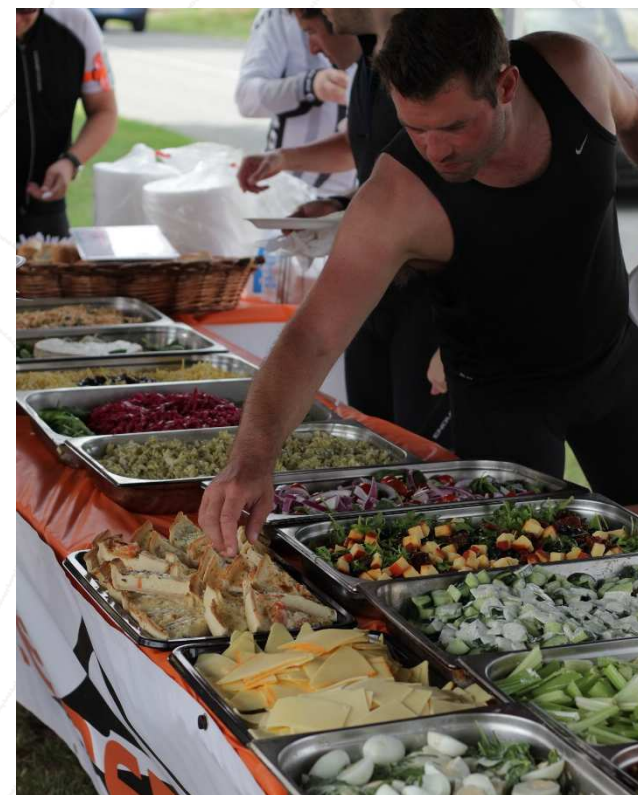
Starter: Buffet salad, melon or quiche

Main: Lasagne (beef or vegetarian), hamburger with fries or chicken in a white sauce with rice

Dessert: Dessert buffet, mousse or fruit salad

### Water

Water is provided to fill up your bottles each morning before cycling. We will have a couple of water stops throughout the day, where we will re-group and have drinks and snacks. Stops are scheduled approximately every 20 miles cycled. There will be one scheduled stop in the morning and one in the afternoon. Water, cordial, cereal bars, fruit and other tasty treats will be available.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation that we will stay in during our challenge will be a combination of 2 and 3 star standard. The hotel chains we use include Novotel, Mercure, Holiday Inn Express, Ibis (Styles and Budget), Campanile, Balladins, Kyriad, B&B Hotels and Premier Classe.

The accommodation will usually be on a twin sharing basis. The beds in Europe are generally a lot closer together than what would be expected in the UK and sometimes the twin beds can be touching. The room sizes also differ in Europe compared to the UK and are generally a lot smaller. Every hotel room will have en-suite washing facilities, but some en-suites will be smaller than others.

Single rooms can be secured subject to availability and an additional fee. If you would like further information, please email the Customer Care team [customer.care@globaladventurechallenges.com](mailto:customer.care@globaladventurechallenges.com)

Please note, if there are more than 30 people on the challenge we may be required to use multiple hotels in one location to ensure we can secure the number of rooms required.

Approximately 6 weeks before the challenge, we put together rooming lists for every hotel and partner

you up with someone of the same sex and approximately the same age where we can. If you would like to share with someone you know on the challenge please let us know no later than 7 weeks prior to the departure date and we will endeavour to partner you up with that person for the duration of the challenge. If you have chosen to do this challenge with a group of friends or work colleagues please let us know who is in your group and we will try to get you all in the same hotel. Due to the complex nature of the challenge and group sizes, requests cannot be guaranteed, and once they have been finalised, cannot be changed.

Names of the hotels you will be staying in and who you will be sharing with will be supplied to you during event registration.

Overnight, bikes will either be locked in secure rooms in the accommodation, locked in your own room or loaded into the luggage vans.



## LUGGAGE

You will need a large holdall/rucksack for your main luggage which will be transported by vehicle between our accommodations each day. We strongly recommend that your main piece of luggage weighs no more than 20kgs. Our ground crew and porters will be lifting and transporting your luggage whilst you are on the challenge so please keep this in mind when packing.

You may also wish to bring a small backpack/camelbak to carry any essentials with you during the day i.e. sunscreen, tissues, camera, small personal first aid kit etc.

## TELEPHONE & WI-FI

Generally the phone signal throughout Belgium and Germany is very good.

All hotels have Wi-Fi, but there may be a small cost for this.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## EVENT CREW

A support team from Global Adventure Challenges will be in attendance throughout the challenge. At least one support vehicle 'floating' to provide support as and when required. The following roles will be covered on your challenge, with smaller numbers some crew will fulfil multiple roles:

**Event Manager** – They will oversee the entire challenge and all the behind the scenes responsibilities (this is a LONG list). This person will be the first one awake and the last one to sleep to ensure you have the best possible time on your challenge.

**Bike Mechanic** – This role is fulfilled by highly talented, skilled crew. Make sure you have the bike mechanic's number with you at all times, this will be supplied to you on the back of your route guide. The bike mechanic will be travelling with the group in a support vehicle, providing help and expertise if needed on more serious repairs.

**Caterer** – This person/team will become one of your favourite people on the challenge! They will be one of the first to leave in the morning to go ahead to the lunch stop and prepare food for the group.

**Hotel Coordinators** – This role is one that you may not see on the route. For larger cycling groups this team head straight to the next hotel, transferring your luggage and organising room keys so that when you arrive you can get to your room promptly and have a restful evening.

**Route Markers** – They will be out marking the route a day in advance. You may not see these people as they leave the hotel early in the morning to drive the route they marked the day before and mark the route for the next day. You will definitely see the route markers at the finish as they will arrive there first and get it ready for the group's arrival.

**Water stop** – The role of the water stop person is to drive ahead of the group and set up planned water stops in towns or villages along route. The water stops are essential for you to replenish your water supplies and also top up on energy with fruit, cereal bars and other treats.



## TIPPING

Tipping your guides/support crew is appropriate, customary and always appreciated. Your crew work in teams and evenly split all gratuities they receive. Your gratuity should reflect the quality of service you received and anything special your support crew did to enhance your trip.



# BRUSSELS TO COLOGNE CYCLE



## BRUSSELS TO AACHEN

### Route Highlights

- Start at the Grand Place and cycle through Brussels.
- Cycle through Maastricht, the capital and largest city of the province of Limburg.
- Finish in the stunning town of Aachen.

Total distance: 95 miles

### Timings

Departure time: 7:00am

Arrival at hotel: 4:00pm – 5:30pm

Minimum cycling speed required: 10 mph

Total rest time allocated: 60 mins

### Elevation Profile



Total ascent: 3,845 ft.

Total descent: 3,323 ft

## AACHEN TO COLOGNE

### Route Highlights

- Cycle through stunning country side surrounding lake Wehebachtalsperre.
- Cycle past large arable fields and agricultural land.
- Finish at the gothic cathedral in Cologne.

Total distance: 52 miles

### Timings

Departure time: 9:00am – 10:00am

Arrival at finish: 3:00pm

Arrival at hotel: 4:00pm

Minimum cycling speed required: 10 mph

Total rest time allocated: 60 mins

### Elevation Profile



Total ascent: 2,175 ft.

Total descent: 2,682 ft.

