

ALPINE ROUTE

Yvoire →

Distance: 68 kilometers

Chatel

Climbing: 1,340 meters

DAY

2

Towns: Yvoire, Thonon, Abondance, Chatel

Highlights

Boat cruise across lake

Walk-around medieval city of Yvoire

Supper at one of Chatel's best restaurants

We begin our trip across Switzerland with a boat ride to France. The pier is a short walk from our hotel. From there we'll take a lake cruise to the medieval city of Yvoire.

After a short walk and coffee, we'll find our bikes prepped and ready to ride just outside the city walls. From Yvoire we will bike around 25 kilometers to Thonon. This is the only part of the entire trip in which we'll encounter significant traffic and a lack of bicycle lanes.

We're in France and the roads simply aren't as well planned or maintained. Just be careful and stay together so that we arrive in Thonon as a group.

After lunching in Thonon, we'll begin climbing. The first section is the steepest, but then things even out so that you hardly notice the grade. You have got 950 meters over the course of 45 kilometers, a nice, gradual climb to get your legs in the mood for things to come. You're in the French department of "Haute Savoie" and this particular region south of the lake is known as Chablais.

Our road follows the Vallée d'Abondance, an appropriate name given the vast resources. Although winter tourism is quite big here, many people also work in forestry, cheese-making, apiculture, dairy and fruit harvesting.

Although the towns may seem rather sleepy in the summer, the snow brings buses of skiers from Geneva and beyond in the winter months. You've got the roads and scenery to yourself right now.

We'll keep climbing until we reach Chatel, a popular ski village near the peak of the climb.

Our hotel has it all, so have a sauna, whirlpool or swim before tucking into a French mountain meal downstairs with the rest of our crew.