

GTC Dunoon weekend

Tour Organiser: Martin Jamieson

Friday 02nd to Monday 05th May 2025

This club weekend is to Dunoon on the fabulous Clyde Riviera. From here we have two cycling day trips, on the 3 ferries route (via Wemyss Bay and Bute), and also south to Toward and Loch Striven.

Our accommodation will be in the Esplanade Hotel in Dunoon where they have made us very welcome over the last two trips.

Itinerary

Friday 02nd May 2025 Bellahouston Park to Dunoon

Meeting at the GTC shipping container in Bellahouston at 9.30, loading luggage into the van, and departing by 10.00. Cycling to Paisley and then on to Kilmacolm for lunch at the Birkmyre café, then on passed the Skelpies to Gourock. Please bring vision impaired concession cards for use on ferry.

- Route distance: 51.0km
- Route altitude gain: 512m
- Accommodation: Esplanade Hotel
- Meals: (L, D)

Saturday 03rd May 2025 The 3 ferries

- 1st ferry is to Gourock and then cycling south for 8 miles to Wemyss Bay (parts of this are on the main road), - 2nd ferry to Rothesay. Optional coffee and bacon roll on the ferry! Then cycling south across Bute, before turning west and north towards Ettrick Bay, where we have a sandwich lunch. Then north to the ferry pier at Rhubodach,- 3rd ferry Rhubodach to Colintrave might be the shortest Calmac ferry crossing, then cycling north and east for 22 miles to Dunoon. This takes us past the head of Loch Striven. If the weather forecast is better for Sunday then we will swap the rides around to get the best weather for the 3 ferries ride.

- Route distance: 85.0km

- Route altitude gain: 983m
- Accommodation: Esplanade Hotel
- Meals: (B, L, D)

Sunday 04th May 2025 Loch Striven

Cycle south on very quiet flat roads along the shore of the Firth of Clyde. At Toward we have views south to Rothesay, then we turn west and north up along the shore of Loch Striven. The return journey is the same in reverse, but the view will be different.

- Route distance: 49.0km
- Route altitude gain: 346m
- Accommodation: Esplanade Hotel
- Meals: (B, D)

Monday 05th May 2025 Dunoon to Glasgow

Departing at 9.30 and cycling north to Hunter's Quay for the ferry to Gourock. Cycling back from Gourock, to Finlaystone Country Park for lunch, then on to Bellahouston Park.

- Route distance: 54.0km
- Route altitude gain: 494m
- Accommodation: none
- Meals: (B)

Dates and Prices

Cost

- Land only price: £270

Payment Schedule

A deposit of £120 is payable after submitting the booking form and receiving the bank details and reference, with the final balance of £150 to be paid by Saturday 1st March 2025.

Price includes:

- 3 nights hotel accommodation in Dunoon, on a shared basis
- Breakfast and dinner for 3 days
- Ferry tickets between McInroy's Point and Hunter's Quay
- Ferry tickets for the 3 Ferries ride
- Luggage transfer from Bellahouston to Dunoon. This is by van and is limited to 10kg per person. Ideally in one bag.
- Light lunch on 2 days

Price does not include:

- Travel to or from Bellahouston Park
- Drinks with evening meals
- Lunches not included on two days
- Any other personal costs

Cancellations

Written Notice Received

Cancellation Charge

- Before 1st March 2025: £120 (deposit)

- After 1st March 2025: £270

The price of £270 is based on a minimum number of 10 people taking part in the holiday. If there are insufficient bookings by Tuesday 31st December 2024, we will contact you and return all monies paid.

Holiday Information

Area

Starting from Bellahouston and cycling on the bike path as well as roads, we head to the coast on the Clyde Riviera. At McInroy's Point in Gourock we catch the ferry to Hunter's Quay in Dunoon. Most of the cycling over the weekend will be on quiet minor roads, except for some sections on the mainland. There will be limited or no access to shops, so please bring what you need with you.

Travel

Travel is by ferry to Dunoon, and also as the name implies on the 3 ferries ride. The rest of the travel is by bike or foot.

Travel to the start and from the finish is not included in this holiday.

Communication

Prior to the tour communication will be by email, but shortly before the tour we will set up a WhatsApp group. During the tour most communication will be oral but we will also use WhatsApp to communicate and share photos. Ideally everyone will bring a smart phone and be happy to be included in the group. If you are not on What's App please let us know so that we can endeavour to pass on key information by other means.

Accommodation

We will stay again in the Esplanade Hotel in Dunoon, which the Scottish Tourist Board describe as 3*. All rooms have en-suite facilities, and the prices are based on two people sharing a room.

When booking with a partner to share please specify twin or double beds.

Meals, Health and Diet

During our stay in the hotel both breakfast and dinner are included. Rolls / sandwiches will be provided for lunch on two days and on the other days we will pay for our own lunches. Café stops and beverages are not included in the tour price. Most of the tour is in sparsely populated areas so there may be few options for procuring lunch and these could be closed on the day we need them. Please carry sufficient food and water to last you all day if necessary. Most places are happy to accept credit cards but please carry some cash just in case.

Please advise the tour organizer of any dietary requests in your Booking application, and do remember to pack any medications that you need. Can you also remind the tour organizer of any dietary requests and health issues before the start of the tour.

Cycles and Equipment

TYPE OF BIKE

Club tandems will be available for the weekend but please advise if you prefer to bring your own. Most types of solo bikes would be suitable for this holiday.

MAINTENANCE - for solo bikes and privately owned tandems

You should ensure your tandem or solo cycle is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. A low bottom gear (eg. small chainring the same size or smaller than the largest cog on your rear wheel) is recommended. Mudguards are optional but demonstrate respect to those who are following you in wet weather. Lights are recommended in the very unlikely event of arriving back late and useful if walking outdoors at night. A bell is advised and bring a bike lock for security. Water bottles are required to ensure you are hydrated at all times. You must carry sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs, including two inner tubes, spare gear and brake cable, split link and spare brake pads. There are almost no bike shops on route and they are never when you need them. You are advised to use 28mm tyres, or larger, to suit the variable terrain.

This tour is based in one hotel so the luggage transfer is only from Bellahouston to the hotel (and back to Bellahouston). The luggage weight for transfers is limited to 10kg per person, which is usually sufficient for any holiday, washing spare clothes each night

Rides, Rest Days and Fitness

This is a club weekend using tandems, so we will cycle as a group, but may spread out more on minor roads. If one or more tandem pairs wish to do something different then please discuss with the tour organizer first. There may not be sufficient solo cyclists to support people riding independently of the main group. Please do train by completing several rides of similar distance and ascent to the longest of the days planned for the tour. There will be some longer club runs during March and April to facilitate this.

Weather, Clothing and Culture

The weather is likely to be very similar to that we enjoy in the Glasgow area, but do bring some additional layers just in case.

Diane and I like open water swimming, and there will be some opportunities to swim or just paddle if you would like to join us. Please only do what you are safe and comfortable with. A swimming costume, goggles and microlight towel would not add much weight to carry.

Please carry waterproof clothing and sun screen.

Helmets are optional, but are recommended.

Maps and Guides

The tour organizer will email a link to Plotaroute with all of the planned rides for the tour. These can be downloaded to your Garmin, or other cycle computer, or phone. If you do not use such technology please do bring the relevant pages from a road atlas and highlight the planned routes. Maybe bring the road atlas pages as well as a Garmin.

Travel Insurance

We recommend purchasing travel insurance in case you have to cancel for any reason.

Ferries

The tour includes ferries to get to Dunoon and also on the 3 ferries cycle. The Western Ferries journey is critical for us getting to Dunoon, but they do have four ferries operating the schedule, so this reduces the risk of maintenance problems.

Unlike on planes, if a ferry is cancelled because of bad weather the ferry company does not compensate travellers. Bikexplore would help make alternative arrangements, but the cost of these is not included in your holiday.

Tour Organizer - Contact Details

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