



Biking

VBT Bicycling Vacations

92 79 92 91 95.7 89.9

The first U.S. cycling outfitter to go international back in 1971, VBT rides everywhere from Vietnam to Costa Rica, with plenty of Europe in between. Castles, châteaux, mountain lodges, and inns host bikers exploring secluded Croatian fishing villages or South Carolina's Revolutionary War forts.

Signature Trip: "The Tuscan Coast," Italy, seven days, \$2,095; vbt.com

BikeHike Adventures

90 85 90 92 91.7 89.7

Almost every trip incorporates this outfitter's two sports of choice (biking and hiking), and most add a third or fourth. Reasonable prices and fast-paced itineraries (clients might blitz through four activities in nine days) attract adventurers who are mostly in their 30s and 40s.

Signature Trip: "Pedal Peru" (mountain biking, hiking, rock climbing), nine days, \$1,899; bikehike.com

Backroads

94 87 92 86 88.3 89.5

If you do something really well—such as designing trips through the world's most beautiful landscapes, serving the best local cuisine, and arranging overnights in outstanding inns—clients will come back. Take it from the cycling gurus at Backroads. This year 75 percent of its 15,000 clients were repeats and referrals.

Signature Trip: "Loire Valley: Family Biking, Premiere Inns," France, six days, \$4,398; backroads.com

Escape Adventures

86 88 90 87 93.3 88.9

Vegetable-oil-fueled sag wagons follow cyclists and mountain bikers through the national parks and on the country roads of western North America. Tours have midlevel amenities—not too fancy (lakes double as showers on some trips), but not bare-bones either (your guide might make bruschetta appetizers).

Signature Trip: "Grand Canyon North Rim," Arizona, five days, \$999; escapeadventures.com

Western Spirit Cycling

81 84 95 89 95 88.8

When the company president is a member of the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame, you can expect a singular level of passion for the sport. This outfitter has spent the past 17 years exploring remote tracks in the U.S., from Grand Teton to Crater Lake, with occasional forays into Central America.

Signature Trip: "White Rim Trail Mountain Bike Tour," Utah, four days, \$785; westernspirit.com

Aegea Adventures

90 76 88 90 98.3 88.5

Most Aegea Adventures trips follow the daily rhythm of Greek life—slow with plenty of time to enjoy the ride. The company dips into Italy and Turkey but mainly sticks to Greece, where it explores sacred ruins, mountain villages, and less touristed islands.

Signature Trip: "Magna Graecia," Greece and Italy, 18 days, \$6,859; aegeaadventures.com

Freewheeling Adventures

80 82 87 86 91.7 85.3

Founded 20 years ago, Freewheeling Adventures is partial to Canada and Europe (including Iceland) but also ventures to Southeast Asia and Israel. Sign on for a set itinerary or use its expertise to build your own.

Signature Trip: "Nova Scotia: Cabot Trail," six days, \$1,995 (with guide); freewheeling.ca



Pure Adventures

81 78 89 81 95 84.8

This outfitter covers most of Europe, but the self-guided cycling tours throughout France are what set it apart. Pure Adventures will arrange your routes, accommodations, and meals in Provence, Burgundy, and other classic regions of France.

Signature Trip: "Tour Chambord," France, six days, \$1,300; pure-adventures.com

Ciclismo Classico

85 73 84 82 98.3 84.5

Ciclismo Classico offers classic Mediterranean cycling in Spain and France but considers Italy—where it began—the crown jewel of European biking. After a sunset spin past the olive groves between San Donato and Cortona, you'll agree.

Signature Trip: "Bike Across Italy," 11 days, \$4,495; ciclismoclassico.com

Back Country Excursions

84 89 81 79 85 83.6

An 8,800-acre private wilderness in Maine—complete with hand-built trails for mountain bikers of all skill levels—is Back Country Excursions' home turf for guided trips. Organic food, wooden yurts, and hot tubs are added bonuses.

Signature Trip: "Front Range of the White Mountains," Maine, three days, \$190; bikebackcountry.com

KEY

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