

In association with HAIBIHE

YOUR GUIDE TO

Cycling and motorcaravanning are a winning combination! Here are some choice cycle trails and expert tips to make the most of your bike on tour

- **Route 1** Assynt Loop 84 Rugged, remote beauty in Scotland
- **Route 2** Applecross Peninsula 86 Splendid views, and the famous challenge of climbing Bealach na Bà
- **Route 3 Cambrian Mountains** Great cycling in the heart of Wales
- **Route 4** Cotswolds Loop Picture-book English villages nestled in lush countryside
- **Route 5** Lake District Spectacular settings, challenging climbs and scenic descents
- **Route 6** Chiltern Hills Relaxed riding, rolling countryside, and glorious surroundings to enjoy
- **Cycling accessories** Our round-up of essential kit to enhance your experience



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EVERYDAY ADVENTURE

HAIBIHE



ROUTE 1 ASSYNT LOOP

Scotland is blessed with some of the UK's most spectacular cycling routes, and there are few that come close to the rugged, remote beauty of this loop, taking in some of the finest coastline on offer

RATING ★★★★★ **DISTANCE** 37 MILES (60KM)

At a comfortable length and with one proper climb of note, this is an achievable ride for many cyclists, especially those who are using an ebike

Route

Head north from idyllic Clachtoll Beach Campsite on the B869. towards Clashnessie and Drumbeg. You'll stay on this undulating road for about 27km, which takes in some of the most remote and beautiful coastline in all of the UK, none more so than from the lookout in Drumbeg itself.

Turn right when the road joins the A894, at which point the road rises steadily for 4km, leading up to and past the picturesque Loch na Gainmhich, before a sweeping descent brings you to the very edge of Loch Assynt.

Turn right here onto the A837, following this quiet road past the tranquil waters of the loch, back towards the coast, where you pick can get all you need for your stay.

up the B869 once more to round out the route with a little rise back up towards Clachtoll.

The area

As you'd probably expect from such a remote corner of Scotland, there's not a huge number of facilities in the area, so a little forward planning will be required for your ride.

In Clachtoll itself, Flossie's Beach Store is the best place to obtain basic supplies – as well as some amazing homemade cakes and fresh coffee.

Five miles south of Clachtoll is the village of Lochinver, which has a variety of small shops, butchers, cafés and restaurants where you

Highlights

You'll have so many to choose from, but there's no doubting that one of the highlights of this beautiful part of the world is the stunning beach in Clachtoll, which, especially on a sunny day, could easily be mistaken for somewhere far balmier, perhaps even more tropical, than Scotland.

On the easterly side of the route, you will find spectacular Loch na Gainmhich, which is the starting point for a truly wonderful walk to Eas a' Chual Aluinn, the highest waterfall in the UK.

And if historic castles are more your thing, then you're in the right place here, with Hermit's Castle in Achmelvich (pictured right) one of the must-visit attractions.



Where to stay... **Clachtoll Beach Campsite**

Given the fairly remote location, there are not too many campsites to pick from for those wishing to take on this ride. However, there really doesn't need to be that much choice, when the one site available is as good and as perfectly located as Clachtoll Beach Campsite. The beach alone is worth the fee for a few nights spent here, and that's before you even get started on the cycling front.

Web clachtollbeachcampsite.com

'One of the highlights of this beautiful part of the world is the stunning beach in Clachtoll' **CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE**



APPLECROSS

With mesmerising views across Inner Sound to the jagged peaks on the Isle of Raasay and the omnipresent Bealach na Bà towering above, this is cycling in Scotland at its best

RATING ★★★★★ **DISTANCE** 43 MILES (70KM)

The difficulty of this route comes in the shape of the iconic and imposing Bealach na Bà climb, one that will test the legs of the fittest cyclists - but an ebike should help ease the pain

Route

This loop can be followed in either direction, it all comes down to two things: which side of Bealach na Bà you want to climb, and when in the ride you want to actually take on this tough climb.

The most recognised ascent of this Alpine-style climb comes from heading south from Shieldaig, which also means you'll be able to enjoy the rest of the loop without worrying about it at the end.

Follow the A896 for 13km past Loch Dùghaill and Loch Damh, shortly after which, a turning on your right leads on to the lower slopes of the climb.

From here, it's more than 626m of vertical ascent over the course of 9.1km, with gradients maxing out at 20%. Once over the

summit, the road sweeps its way down to Applecross, where you turn right onto the small coastal road leading back to Shieldaig after 40km.

Take your time on this stretch, one of the most scenic coastal roads the UK has to offer, passing through remote hamlets, including Cuaig and Fearnbeg.

The area

The peninsula is fairly isolated, offering very few amenities, but Applecross has a village shop for the essentials, a handful of small restaurants and a petrol station.

Shieldaig has a general store, café and restaurant, although it's best to stock up on groceries en route to the area. The nearest bigger store is the Co-op in

Kyle of Lochalsh, or you'll find a selection of smaller stores in surrounding villages.

Highlights

This is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts, so it's easy enough to combine other activities with a visit for cycling.

For walkers, there are Munros to be bagged in the magnificent Torridon Mountains (pictured right), while the windswept Atlantic coast is probably best explored in a kayak.

Eilean Donan Castle is an hour's drive from Applecross. Dating back to the 12th century, this is one of Scotland's most photographed castles. Wildlife lovers can take a boat from the picturesque village of Plockton to spot seals.



Where to stay... **Shieldaig Camping & Cabins**

Situated a stone's throw from the water's edge, Shieldaig Camping & Cabins is a really wonderful family-run location, perfect as a base not just for cycling, but also for a host of other outdoor activities in the area. For those preferring to be further south on the loop, and at the foot of the Bealach na Bà climb, there's also a small site located on the outskirts of Applecross.

Web shieldaigcampingandcabins.co.uk

'The most recognised ascent of this Alpine-style climb comes from heading south from Shieldaig' **CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE**



The Green Desert of Wales, between Snowdonia National Park and the Brecon Beacons, is often overlooked, yet it is home to some truly fantastic cycling on road and gravel

RATING ★★★★★ **DISTANCE** 22 MILES (35KM)

A shorter route mixing gravel tracks with small country lanes to showcase the best of the Elan Valley, in the north of the Cambrian Mountains

Route

Starting from Rhayader, follow the Elan Valley Trail out of town for 2km, before turning left onto a small country lane looping around the back of Carngafallt, then over a small climb and down into Elan Village.

Turn left at the T-junction and go past the visitor centre, rejoining the Elan Valley Trail to ride along the banks of Garreg Ddu Reservoir.

Where the trail crosses the road, bear left on the road and cross the dam, staying to the right once you have crossed over.

Stay on this road for 9km, during which time you will pass alongside Penygarreg Reservoir and Craig Goch before reaching a T-junction.

Turn right here and begin the gentle climb up and away from

the valley, taking time to stop and enjoy the wonderful views back across the water.

Once over the climb, there's a descent to enjoy, taking you all the way back to the start in Rhayader.

The area

Rhayader has a variety of shops, cafés, pubs, greengrocers and a butcher's, as well as a small bike shop for spare parts or repairs.

For larger supermarkets, petrol stations and a bigger bike shop, the market town of Builth Wells is a 25-minute drive to the south.

Highlights

The main appeal of this area is undoubtedly its vast open spaces and sense of solitude, making it a perfect destination for cycling

and walking. History buffs will be intrigued by the grand medieval abbey at Strata Florida. The abbey, whose name comes from the Latin for Vale of Flowers, has stood on lush meadows beside the River Teifi (pictured right) since 1201, and its ruins are fascinating.

From the car park here, there is a walk or an off-road ride to reach the nearby Teifi Pools, the collective name for the lakes of Llyn Teifi, Llyn Hir, Llyn Gorlan and Llyn Egnant.

If you're walking, pack a picnic and enjoy a leisurely day exploring the lakes. Given the absence of infrastructure in the heart of the Cambrian Mountains, this is also a superb destination for stargazing, with the Claerwen Reservoir dam making an ideal observation point.



Where to stay... Elan Oaks

On the edge of Elan Village, two miles from the historic town of Rhayader, this is a perfect starting point for this idyllic loop through the heart of the beautiful Elan Valley. On the edge of Rhayader is the Wyeside Camping and Caravanning Club Site, which offers a variety of pitches on a tranquil campsite that is surrounded by verdant woodland.

Web elanoaks.co.uk campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk

'The main appeal of this area is its vast open spaces and sense of solitude'

GET READY FOR ADVENTURE

The trails are out there waiting – now here's what you need from your bike

Your motorhome is pitched, your route plotted and you're about to hit the trail – but is your bike also ready for an adventure?

Whether you're planning to go gentle off-roading or cycle the streets, a trekking bike will take you where you want to go in comfort and style. They combine rugged practicality with city style, making them the perfect ride on your next tour.

And a trekking e-bike makes your cycle even easier: with the inbuilt motor taking on as much – or as little – of the strain as you'd like, you'll be able to go further than you ever thought possible. Which means more adventure and less work-out.

So what else do you need to look for in the perfect adventure e-bike? Here's our handy guide.

LIGHTS

Once you've got your bike, you'll want to use it for all-year adventures, so lights are a must. Invest in a decent set, or better still, choose a trekking e-bike that has built-in lights - that way you'll never forget to take them with you, or run out of charge mid-ride.

SUSPENSION

Okay, so it adds a bit of weight to your bike, but you'll find the benefits more than make up for that. Suspension forks absorb bumps on gnarly trails, and reduce the amount of vibration through the handlebars, meaning a more comfortable overall ride.

TYRES

From muddy paths to smooth Tarmac, good trekking bikes have tyres that are broad enough for various surfaces. Their more pronounced tread means you'll feel safe and secure on your adventure, no matter where – and when – you choose to ride.

RELAXED GEOMETRY

Road bikes offer a low, tucked-in profile – which you'll find uncomfortable after a few minutes on your adventure. Look for a cycle geometry that lets you keep your head up and enjoy the view.

DISC BRAKES

It's crucial that you can trust your brakes, so look out for discs. Not only are they much more powerful than rim brakes, they're also easier to keep clean, as they're further away from the muddy trail that you're cycling on – keeping you in full control.



To find out more about Haibike's electric bikes, visit www.haibike.com

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COTSWOLDS

Few places are as quintessentially English as the Cotswolds, and this scenic route takes in some of the most picturesque villages in the region, with plenty of opportunities to stop for coffee and cake

RATING ★★★★★ **DISTANCE** 40 MILES (64KM)

One short, steep climb aside, this route is fairly easy going, along mainly flat roads, with the occasional undulation to keep the legs warm

As you leave the charming village of Bourton-on-the-Water, take the A436 towards Sevenhampton and Brockhampton, passing The Craven Arms. At this point, you'll need to make a right-hand turn and head due north towards the market town of Winchcombe.

You will pass the impressive Brockhampton Park estate, dating back to the early Middle Ages, before the route drops down into this bustling town.

Follow the road through the centre of Winchcombe before taking a right onto Castle Street, which leads onto Sudeley Hill and the steepest section of the route, keeping to the left when the road forks before the top of the ascent. The road then meanders slightly

upwards for a further 12km, where the reward for your efforts will be some wonderful views, as well as excellent coffee and cake at Morris & Brown Café, at Broadway Tower.

From here, it's a case of heading south and stitching together the villages of Blockley, Condicote and the Slaughters before returning to Bourton-on-the-Water.

The area

Apart from all of that splendid scenery, another beauty of the Cotswolds is that you're never far from essential amenities, with Cheltenham the obvious town for stocking up on everything you'll need during your time away.

However, you'll find that almost all of the villages in the area have plenty of shops, pubs and cafés,

usually offering a fine array of local produce. Broadway makes a great stop for a hearty lunch or evening meal, and a visit to Broadway Deli is a must for food-lovers.

Highlights

For something a little different, the Cotswold Motoring Museum (pictured right) is intriguing, with a lot more than just a collection of cars on display.

If animals are more your thing, a visit to the Cotswold Wildlife Park & Gardens is a must, where rhinos and giraffes are just two of the star attractions to be enjoyed.

If you are staying at the Caravan and Motorhome Club campsite in Broadway, there's also the chance to see the very first purpose-built leisure caravan, The Wanderer.



Where to stay... Bourton-on-the-Water Campsite

As you would expect, the Caravan and Motorhome Club site on the outskirts of Bourton-on-the-Water has excellent facilities, and makes a great starting point for the ride. Another option not far from the start of the route is Cotswold Farm Park, which also has a wide variety of activities on offer, and there's another CAMC site at Broadway.

Web caravanclub.co.uk; cotswoldfarmpark.co.uk

'Broadway makes a great stop for a hearty lunch or evening meal, and a visit to Broadway Deli'

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE



ROUTE 5 DISTRICT

It's home to some of the UK's most challenging riding, but for every steep climb, the Lake District has just as many splendid views and dreamy descents – it's great for those with an ebike

RATING ★★★★ **DISTANCE** 40 MILES (64KM)

The double ascent of Hardknott and Wrynose alone makes this a five-star route, never mind the lesser-known climbs, but the hard work is offset by some truly magical views

Route

Head south out of Coniston on the A593 to Torver, where not long after passing through the village, you'll turn right onto Old Rake, at which point the climbing starts, with two short, steep ascents.

Arriving in Ulpha at the foot of the second descent, you turn right and head upwards again, crossing Birker Fell on a scenic but tough road towards Eskdale Green.

Before reaching the village, turn right. Now is the time to take note of the 'steep gradient' warning signs, because this is where the ride gets serious.

Ahead of you lies the double ascent of Hardknott Pass, one of the hardest climbs in the UK, followed in quick succession by Wrynose, which taken alone is

not as tough as Hardknott, but coming so soon afterwards, is another formidable challenge.

Between the two is a stunningly beautiful stretch of road alongside the River Duddon.

At the foot of the descent from Wrynose, turn sharp left for one last climb, the steep ascent up and around Blea Tarn, before heading south through Elterwater and back to the finish in Coniston.

The area

The Lake District is one of the UK's top tourist destinations, so you're never going to be particularly far from shops, fuel stations and an abundance of eateries.

Coniston itself has two smaller shops, a fuel station and a handful of pubs serving food. Further afield are the busy towns of Ambleside and Windermere, which offer visitors a larger array of good restaurants, cafés and shops.

Highlights

Aside from being a haven for lovers of the outdoors, the Lake District offers a variety of other activities and places of interest.

A drive or cycle to Honister Slate Mine (pictured right) is a great day out, where as well as a tour of the mines, you can get an adrenaline fix on the Via Ferrata.

For a more relaxing time, why not take a boat tour on one of the fine old steamers on Ullswater?

For walkers, there's something for every level of fitness, with Scafell Pike, the highest peak in England, a wonderful day out.



Where to stay...

Coniston Park Coppice Caravan and Motorhome Club Site

This is a well-equipped base for the route and for exploring the wider area. The open-all-year site welcomes members and non-members alike, and is set within 63 acres of stunning National Trust woodland. Coniston Water is only 400 yards away, and you can take a scenic steamboat trip from Coniston Pier (1.5 miles away).

Web caravanclub.co.uk

'Between Hardknott and Wrynose is a stunningly beautiful stretch of road by the River Duddon'



CHILTERN

The rolling green countryside of the Chiltern Hills makes a wonderful destination for relaxed riding, although there are also plenty of steep climbs if you're looking for a more challenging adventure

RATING ★★★★★ **DISTANCE** 30 MILES (48KM)

A gently undulating route that showcases some of the finest parts of this beautiful region

Route

Leaving the market town of Tring on Tring Hill Road, take a left turn onto Upper Icknield Way, heading towards Wendover.

Pass through Wendover and turn left on South Street, which turns into London Road. After 3km, turn right onto Cobblershill Lane, a gradual ascent that offers lovely views on either side.

At the bottom of the descent, turn right and then left in quick succession to head south-west towards Great Hampden.

Turn right in the village onto Pink Road before a sharp left cuts back onto Bryants Bottom Road and a long, steadily meandering climb through the woods. Follow the road down into Great Kingshill

and on to Little Missenden along the picturesque Penfold Lane.

Continue north-east towards Chesham, passing through the town and leaving on Vale Road, and after 4km, take the right turn onto Chesham Road, which leads you to Wigginton.

Now simply follow the road under the A41 and back to Tring.

The area

Despite the picturesque, rural setting, the Chiltern Hills are well served by a variety of towns on either side of this lovely area.

To the north is Aylesbury and to the south is Hemel Hempstead, both of which have an excellent selection of shops, supermarkets and fuel stations. Tring also has

several food shops and a fuel station, so you're never far from everything that you might need.

Highlights

There's perhaps no better way to see the Chiltern Hills than from the air, with Adventure Balloons (adventureballoons.co.uk) offering a range of brilliant hot air balloon trips across the region.

For a more sedate experience, head to Missenden Abbey and enjoy afternoon tea in the fine 12th-century building, followed by a stroll around the grounds.

Take another step back in time with a visit to Chiltern Open Air Museum (pictured right), where you can learn skills such as willow weaving and blacksmithing.



Where to stay... Hill Farm Campsite

Not far from Tring and close to Wendover Woods is the small, family-run Hill Farm Campsite, which has a handful of hardstandings with hook-up.

To the north of Tring, you will find Town Farm Camping & Caravanning, a charmingly rustic yet well-equipped campsite based on a working farm, which also provides excellent facilities.

Web hillfarmcampsite.co.uk; townfarmcamping.co.uk

'Cobblershill Lane is a gradual ascent that offers lovely views on either side'





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Basil Mosse Rain Parka

Beat the worst of the weather with this stylish jacket in a waterproof, breathable fabric, to keep you comfortable on even the longest ride. The fish-tail design means your legs stay drier, too. There's a choice of colours, black and olive green.

Price From £72.99 Web bikester.co.uk



Thule Excellent Standard bike rack

You'll need something to carry your bikes on tour, and the Thule Excellent Standard rack is a great way to do so. It fits neatly onto the rear of your motorhome, and is capable of carrying two bikes, each up to 30kg in weight, so is perfectly suited to ebikes.

Price £374.99 Web thule.com/en-gb/



MET Crossover Helmet

This cycle helmet is perfect for your next adventure, on- or off-road, helping to keep you safer in the event of a fall. It features MET's Safe-T E-Mid fitting system, for the ultimate in comfort and protection, and has a removable visor. Six great colours are available.

Price £40 Web wiggle.co.uk



Axa Linq City 100 Bike Lock

A good lock means you can leave your cycle in confidence, and the Axa Ling City 100 should do the job. It's 1m long, with an anti-drill plate in the cylinder, a symmetrical key for ease of use, and rubber grips. Its Sold Secure Silver rating provides additional peace of mind. Price £45.99 Web raleigh.co.uk



XLC WB-K04 Drinking Bottle

It's important to stay hydrated when you're out on your adventures, so you'll need a good-size water bottle. This one holds 750ml, with an extra-large opening to make filling the bottle that bit easier, and the white geometric design will look smart when mounted on your bike.

Price £3.99 Web bikester.co.uk



GoPro HERO10 Black

GoPro is what you need to keep a record of your riding - it offers 5.3K video and 23MP photos, has improved low-light performance and is waterproof to 33ft. Uploading is easy, and a free SD card and rechargeable battery are included. **Price** £329.98 (inc one-year GoPro sub) Web gopro.com/en/gb



Vaude Aqua Pannier Bike Bag

This stylish pannier bag is easy to fit onto the rear of your cycle and has a volume of 24 litres. It's also waterproof to ensure that your gear stays dry. The reflective trim helps you to stay safer on the road, and there are various colours available. Price From £53.49 Web wiggle.co.uk



Namedsport HydraFit Energy Drink

You might not think you'd need an energy drink on shorter rides, but you'll feel much better if you stay hydrated. Namedsport HydraFit Energy Drink is a hypotonic mix with the minerals, salts and vitamins you need during exercise; the 400g tub will make 20 servings, and a bottle is included.

Price £7 Web sigmasports.com



Shimano SH-ET5 Bike Shoes

It's crucial to find shoes suitable for cycling and walking when you want to explore on foot, such as these from Shimano. The semi-rigid midsole plate allows for efficient power transfer to the pedal, while the robust tread pattern is ideal for walking on rougher terrain.

Price £85.99 Web bikester.co.uk