

<b>CHALLENGE ROUTE</b>	<b>To Follow:</b> Rhone Route 1
Geneva	<b>Map:</b> Bike Switzerland Maps
to Chexbres	<b>GPS points:</b> 1-70
<b>DAY 02</b>	<b>Distance:</b> 85 KM
	<b>Watch out for:</b> Left turn to Celigny at GPS 3 Turn in the vineyards after waypoint 64

### Points of Interest:

**POI Rolle:** (GPS 28) Beautiful promenade in Rolle

**POI Prex:** (GPS 46) Interesting medieval village with lovely port.

**POI Morges:** (GPS 50) Great pedestrian street.

**POI Lausanne:** (GPS between 59 & 60) Exciting lakefront, ice cream, terrasses

**POI Maison des Vignerons** (GPS “wine stop” after Waypoint 68):

Our first 16 or 17 kilometers will take us out on the lake road. This first part of the route is straight with no turns until kilometer 16 or 17. You may find this rather boring, but it will allow you to stretch your legs after your long flight. We'll then turn north into the countryside and things will become much more pastoral and interesting.

We'll be having lunch in *Rolle*. Once in Rolle, you should find the fountain on the main street. Across from the fountain, you will see an arched path leading through to the lake. If you follow the lake (west, away from the chateau) you should find the van. You will also find a café with a large terrace...enjoy their bathrooms.

It's a 300 meter climb to Chexbres. The ride is beautiful and a bit of a challenge. If you choose not to take this challenge, you could continue to Vevey and take the train to Chexbres. This won't save you any mileage, but you'll get out of climbing. It would, however, be a shame to miss the vineyards.

At some point shortly after the town of Lutry you will see a Honda garage on your left. We will take a left just before the garage to begin the climb.

During the climb, we will pass through the town of “Epesses” and stop at the “Maison du Vigneron” for a glass of wine. It doesn't open until 5 pm, so no reason to go too fast. Their cave is quite impressive.

## CHALLENGE ROUTE

Geneva → Chexbres

**DAY 02**

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We will have to pass through the town of Chexbres to get to the hotel. Look for small yellow signs pointing the direction to various hotels. Your hotel is the “Pré-Alpina” and it is on the “Route de Chardonne”. Careful once you get on the Route de Chardonne...you will be going downhill and might miss the hotel. It is on your left and is obscured by the woods.

Bikes go downstairs in the parking garage. Take advantage of the sauna and whirlpool downstairs. We'll meet downstairs for drinks at 7:15 and plan on eating at 8pm.

You should always look at your telephone between the time you arrive at the hotel and the time scheduled for supper. If any changes are made to the schedule, you'll receive an sms.

CHALLENGE ROUTE	<b>To Follow:</b> Route 9
Chexbres	<b>Map:</b> Route 9 Book (Pages 20, 22, 24 and 26 )
to Saanen-Gstaad	<b>GPS points:</b> 2.1-2.50
<b>DAY</b> 03	<b>Distance:</b> 76 KM
	<b>Watch out for:</b> Easy to miss turn after 2.35

### Points of Interest:

**POI Gruyère:** (GPS: after 2.29)

We take the road that we came in on (*Route de Chardonne*) and continue on this road all the way to *Chatel St. Denis*, but for a challenge and better views, some may choose to turn off on the RED route at 2.2. Either way, you end up in *Chatel St. Denis*. Note that today you will also encounter “Route 4” signs...no worries, the Route 4 and Route 9 run together at certain points.

Once in *Chatel St. Denis*, keep your eyes open for Route #9. Make a habit of checking at each intersection. The paths are well marked, but if you’re not looking you will miss them.

The next town of note is “Bulle” and then it’s onwards to Gruyère where we will stop for lunch. Lunch will be set up outside the cheese museum. You’ve probably heard of Gruyère: the town itself is a small medieval village perched on a hill above the museum. The village is definitely worth visiting, and so we’ll take an hour or so after lunch to visit.

The next small town is Mont Bovon and the path is well marked. You’ll be on a busy road once out of Mont Bovon. You’ll follow this road for 1 or 2 kilometers before meeting a Route 9 sign on your right. This is easy to miss. No worries if you do miss it...just follow the main road into Chateau d’Oex .

Our hotel is in Saanen (right before Gstaad). There is a long climb, so save some of your psychological stamina. You can take the short-cut marked on the hotel map...the climb is steeper, but considerably shorter.

The hotel has a full spa, indoor swimming pool and great piano bar with a magnificent view. Lots of riders stay here without ever getting to the spa, but man....it’s worth it.

If the weather is nice, we’ll have drinks outside behind the swimming pool before going to supper. Otherwise we’ll meet at the bar. As always, check your phone for important sms messages.

<b>CHALLENGE ROUTE</b>	<b>To Follow:</b> Route 9
Saanen-Gstaaad	<b>Map:</b> Route 9 Book, pages 26,28,30,32
to Interlaken-Wengen	<b>GPS points:</b> 3.1 - 3.68
<b>DAY 04</b>	<b>Distance:</b> 74 KM
	<b>Watch out for:</b> Dangerously steep gravel downhill if you do the « downhill detour » Also, watch for on-coming traffic and dangerous tunnels when riding on Lake Thun (3.59 — 3.62)

Make sure you have a big breakfast and pack some treats because we have a lot of biking before lunch today. And there's a lot to take at this breakfast table this morning !

The climb from the hotel is long, but at a low grade. If you're not with your guide, keep your eyes on the GPS because after Waypoint 3.5 there is an «Easy to Miss» waypoint. This will take you down a very steep gravel descent. If you are shaky you should simply keep following the main road to Zweisimmen. If you are unsure, you can always take this more "adventurous" route and walk your bike down the scary parts. We'll all reconnoiter at the train station in the town of Zweisimmen.

Afterwards we'll be riding on nice gravel next to rivers and through pastures until we arrive at our lunch spot which will be set up in the "middle-of-nowhere". Have plenty of water with you after lunch...you've got some to do after lunch.

Once in Interlaken, we will need to proceed through town until "Interlaken Ost" train station. The van driver should be waiting here and he will point out the "Hotel Carlton" which is 100 meters from the station. We will bring our bicycles downstairs and store them here for the two nights that we'll be in Wengen.

We'll wait for the group to catch up and board the train to Wengen at 05 or 35 past. There are no cars allowed in Wengen, so the train is the only way up ! This means that David will need to hand off the luggage to everyone before boarding the train. The ride is very scenic . We change trains in Lauterbrunnen before arriving in Wengen. The whole trip takes 40 minutes or so. From Wengen the hotel is a short walk.

We will be staying at the Hotel Falken and eating here both nights. This is my own favorite hotel in Wengen because every very room has a great view and the hotel has preserved it's old-world charm by staying in the same family ever since it was built. The people you meet at the reception probably grew up here and have their portraits on the walls.

## CHALLENGE ROUTE

### Wengen Hike

**DAY 05**

You'll be meeting downstairs in the hotel's lobby at 9:30 for your hike.

You'll be packing a sack lunch and everything that you need will be laid out after breakfast at a special "Bike Switzerland" table. Make sure to pack what you will need.

Also, the weather can change suddenly in the mountains. Make sure that you ask for the weather forecast and dress appropriately and prepare for rain if there is a chance in the forecast. Always bring a jacket...you never know.

Finally, make sure that you bring sun block and sunglasses. The mountain rays are much stronger than at lower altitudes.

You'll probably be back from the hike sometime around 4pm, so enjoy the rest of your afternoon. There is a great outdoor pool in town.

Tonight we're eating raclette at the Hotel Falken.

<b>CHALLENGE ROUTE</b>	<b>To Follow:</b> Route 9
Interlaken Wengen	<b>Map:</b> Route 9 Book pages 32,34,36,38
to Lucerne	<b>GPS points:</b> 4.0 - 4.50
<b>DAY</b> 06	<b>Distance:</b> 90 KM (or 76 with boat ride, 70 km if no Brunig)
	<b>Watch out for:</b> Missing the train from Wengen! The BrunigPass!

We'll take the train back down to Interlaken, bring the bags to the van and then get the bikes from the Hotel Carlton, so be ready to bike once you leave the van.

We're going to go off Route 9 and follow the low-traffic road North of the lake to get to Meiringen. From Meiringen, you've got this trip's most difficult climb: The Brunig Pass.

There are trains that go up the Brunig pass every hour at 46 past in the town of Meringen. If you want to avoid the climb up the Brunig, we'll pay for your ticket up and over. You will then get out at our lunch stop in Lungern.

If you do climb the Brunig, there is a long coast down to Lungern. Once in Lungern, be attentive to the Route 9 signs. You'll be coming into Lungern downhill at a high speed. There is a very small church to your left with a Route 9 sign. Watch for it. Many people coast through Lungern and then have to turn back.

In order to find the lunch spot, you'll have to head towards the lake and then follow it West to the campgrounds.

We have a lot of biking to do after lunch, but no more climbing. We might stop off at Sarnen for a look around town and a beer, otherwise just enjoy the scenery.

Once in Lucerne you should go to the train station so that you can situate yourself. You should see the "Hotel Palace" across the lake. Our hotel is directly behind the Palace Hotel on a steep cobblestone street. There is a bike storage room at the foot of the hotel. Use the hooks to hang up your front wheel. Tonight is a "free night", so you can explore

Lucerne, but we're happy to make a suggestion: We like the "Rathaus" brewery on the river and the "bath house" on the lake.

<b>CHALLENGE ROUTE</b>	<b>To Follow:</b> Route 9
Lucerne	<b>Map:</b> Route 9 Book pages 38,40,42,44
to Rapperswil	<b>GPS points:</b> 5.1 - 5.67
<b>DAY 07</b>	<b>Distance:</b> 98 KM
	<b>Watch out for:</b> Make sure to have food and water in abundance when leaving Zug and Einsiedeln. There are few places afterwards.

## Points of Interest:

**POI Einsiedeln Abbey** :(GPS: 5.50) See map book for details

We'll be need to be careful of the traffic in the center of town as we leave Lucerne, but we'll be on dedicated bike paths within 10 minutes.

It's a short morning: 30 rather flat kilometers to lunch on the lake in Zug.

There are steep climbs out of Zug and another steep climb before reaching Rapperswil. Each climb offers stunning views.

You might take some time to visit the large abbey in Einsiedeln (a major catholic pilgrimage site) and taste the Einsiedeln beer. If you want the extra kilometers, you might consider riding around the Sihlsee (lake at Einsiedeln) before getting on the Route 9 path to Rapperswil.

There is some tough climbing between Einsiedeln and Rapperswil: make sure you pack water and a banana or two. There is also a scary gravel descents after the summit...so no shame in walking your bike at this point. Every year a few people fall off.

Rapperswil is lovely and it's worth spending some time walking its streets. Your hotel is the "Jakob Hotel" in the city center. There is a bike garage on the side street next to the hotel. We'll be eating at a new restaurant this evening...let us know if it's worth repeating.

<b>CHALLENGE ROUTE</b>	<b>To Follow:</b> Route 9
<b>Rapperswil</b>	<b>Map:</b> Route 9 book pages 44,46,48,50
<b>to Sax</b>	<b>GPS points:</b> 6.1 - 6.69
<b>DAY 08</b>	<b>Distance:</b> 89 KM
	<b>Watch out for:</b>

Lots of pleasant panoramic riding this morning. You'll be following Lake Zurich before meeting up with the Walensee. At lunch we'll stop in the campgrounds on this lake in the town of Murg. You might consider bringing your swimsuit if the weather is warm because the water is crystal clear.

The towns on your route are nice and small, but there's nothing of note. The train station in Sargans is a good place for a break.

When leaving Sargans (at waypoint 6.48) , you will see there are two different tracks on the GPS. If the weather is good, then follow the track along the Rhine. You'll be perched above the river and crank out the kilometers on a long, straight bike path. Otherwise, if it is windy and rainy, follow the other track as it will offer more protection.

Once on the Rhine path, you'll also be going by Liechtenstein and it's capital Vaduz. This city (and the ride to Vaduz) are quite boring, however. If you'd really like to visit Liechtenstein, then wait until you reach the wooden bridge that crosses the river.

After the Rhine path, you'll follow Route 9 through the town of Buchs and stay on the route until you see a bike sign for SAX. The train station in Buchs is another good place for an ice cream and drink.

Sax is another 12km or so from Buchs. Your hotel is the big Schlossli Hotel in Sax. There is a cave below the hotel where you can put your bikes. If the bikes are exceptionally dirty, there's a hose outside for washing them off.

As this hotel is particularly small, your guides will be staying at another hotel down the road.

Diana and Peter are the hotel owners and both are from the area. Most of the guests are local people from the region (Switzerland, Germany and Liechtenstein) who come for the weekend, but it's also a popular place for wedding receptions and parties. The restaurant is rated by Gault-Milau and has received a rare 16 point rating !Enjoy !



<b>CHALLENGE ROUTE</b>	<b>To Follow:</b> Route 9 or two climbing options.
Sax to	<b>Map:</b> Route 9 Book pages 52,54
Arbon/Rorschach	<b>GPS points:</b> 7 - 7.55
<b>DAY 09</b>	<b>Distance:</b> 60 KM (or more with climbing options)
	<b>Watch out for:</b> Once in Arbon you will not see the bikes again, so be prepared to leave them.

Another easy day. Or not...you have two choices.

We take the main road outside of the hotel in Sax to the town of Frumsen to catch Route 9.

First stop: Alstätten . Here you will find interesting shops and cobbled streets and we'll stop here for a coffee and bathroom break. The real reason being to give our driver enough time to set up lunch in the town of Widnau another 7 or 8 km down the road.

Afterwards you'll be crossing into Austria and through the town of Fussach. The bike signs might look a little different at this point (and things might get messy), but just keep the lake to your right and you can't get lost.

For those of us doing the "standard itinerary", we will be following Lake Constance to Arbon. Swiss national routes 9 and 2 double up here, so you will be seeing signs for both until Rorschach. After Rorschach you will be on #2 only.

If you want to make the last day challenging and have some wonderful views and adventures in the famous "Appenzell" region, we recommend the following detours. However, keep in mind that these detours are demanding. They are not as steep as the Brunig and no gravel, but they are long climbs.

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**Most Difficult:** From Alstätten, take the black gps route. If you look at page 52 of the map book, this corresponds to the pink road that leads to "Gais" and then "Route 42" to Heiden. The route is around 33 km, the grade is around 12% at its steepest and an elevation gain of around 800 meters. You'll have to get some lunch in Alstätten before doing the climb.

**Difficult:** After lunch, take the red gps route between 7.34 and 7.35. This will take you to "Berneck" (page 54 of map book) and then to Heiden. The route is around 22 km, the grade is 12%.

## CHALLENGE ROUTE

### Sax to Arbon/Rorschach

**DAY 09**

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Both of the challenging routes mentioned above will bring you to Rorschach. Once there you will pick up Route #2 and bike west to Arbon.

Once at the Arbon train station, you won't be seeing your bicycles again. Take off all of your bags and GPS if you were given one. Also, if you're using your own pedals/seat, we'll need to take them off before going to the hotel which is just across the street.

If the weather is fine, we plan on eating outdoors at a beer garden. It's about a 10 minute walk.

## CHALLENGE ROUTE

### Return to Geneva via Berne

**DAY 10**

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## Return to Geneva through Berne on Train

We'll stopping through Berne on our way back to Geneva. We'll be following the schedule below. We have a group ticket, so everyone does need to keep to these times unless you've made prior arrangements.

**7:00** Recommended wake-up

**8:30** Load van

**9:00** Walktrain station

**9:17** Train Romanshorn

**9:27** Arrive in Romanshorn

**9:41** Train to Berne

**11:58** Arrive in Berne

**15:20** Meet at train station for return to Geneva

**15:34:** Depart for Geneva (Track 5)

**17:15** Arrive in Geneva.

**18:30** Meet in hotel lobby to walk to supper.

You are free to do as you like in Berne for lunch.

I can recommend the "Anker" restaurant in the center of town for large helpings of good authentic food, or the "Rose Garten" restaurant for spectacular panoramas and reasonable prices. Regardless of what you choose, I would suggest going through the old town and climbing the steps to the rose garden to get an incredible view of medieval Berne's rooftops.

Otherwise, this could very well be your last chance for souvenirs, and Berne does have some great shopping. The shops close at 4pm, so no regrets.

Wear your t-shirts again this evening for a group photo. We're having our meal catered this evening by a personal friend who is also the head chef at the Canadian Embassy: Good eats and lots of wine.

**Note:** A tip and pat on the back to your driver and guide are always appreciated.

If giving something as a group or individually, your last chance may be this evening.