



ULTIMATE GUIDE TO SELF-GUIDED
CALIFORNIA
CYCLING VACATIONS

25 tips, hacks and travel tricks for
an epic and affordable bicycle trip



[pure-adventures.com](https://www.pure-adventures.com)





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6 REASONS TO GO SELF-GUIDED

Self-guided tours offer the same quality, style, service and comforts of most guided trips. One of the key differences is that with self-guided, you are the guide and in control of your days! Sophisticated and discerning travelers have discovered that self-guided travel offers tremendous freedom, flexibility, support and independence. And perhaps best of all, you don't have to do any work to put it together!

1. You travel on the dates that work best for you and your group
2. You travel with your own small group, typically 2 to 10 travelers
3. Your route is meticulously planned by our experienced staff
4. All your lodging is taken care of, and you have a choice of hotel options to fit your budget
5. All luggage transfers are included
6. You have access to local support and emergency services twenty four hours a day

A self-guided vacation is not the same as 'do-it-yourself' or what is also known as self-contained. With a self-contained trip, you are responsible for everything from planning the routes, arranging hotels, luggage transfers and carrying your gear. That does not sound like a fun vacation to us!

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3 HILL TRAINING TIPS FROM THE PROS

Hill training is most often associated with road bike racing and not with self-guided cycling holidays. Of course, going down hill is more fun than going up for most people, but self-guided vacations come in all levels of ability. In California, there aren't that many flat sections to make a complete California cycling tour over flat ground. We do offer moderate trips and challenging road tours like our Sonoma Self Guided Road Tour. As with all our tours, we strongly suggest plenty of time in the saddle - and yes, hill training – for self-guided travelers to enjoy their trips



1. Embrace hill repeats

The basis of any hill training program is hill repeats. BikeRadar suggests starting with 8 repeats on a hill that has three distinct phases (10% grade; flattens out; 12% grade). “Sprint at the start of the hill, sit down and change down on the flatter part, and then have an all-out sprint out of the saddle to the top,” advises BikeRadar expert Dave Lloyd. Record your times for each repeat, trying to maintain the same speed on each repeat.

2. Practice seated climbs

Your legs may be aching and your backside hurting, but by sitting in the saddle for as much of the climb as possible, you're more aerobically efficient. “Sitting back in the saddle will recruit your glutes, giving the large muscles at the back of your thighs more leverage to pedal,” says Andy Cook with CyclingPlus. When you get to the top of the hill, then stand in your pedals to give yourself a break.

3. Strengthen your core muscles

“Often, it isn't the legs that give out on long climbs, but the back,” says Gale Bernhardt with Active.com. When you are cycling on hills, your back is in a different position, and on a particularly hilly route, that could lead to back pain and spasms. Pilates, yoga and other core strengthening and stabilizing activities need to be a part of your hill training routine.

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5 WALLET-FRIENDLY RESTAURANTS

California and Napa Valley are renowned for their fine dining and elegant local food restaurants, but sometimes at the end of the ride (or midride!) a delicious vegetarian plate piled high with local flare or piping hot pizza is what you're craving. When you're kitted up with a bike in tow, heading for haut cuisine isn't feasible, so we've rounded up a few of the top wallet (and bike-friendly) restaurants and pubs in and around Napa Valley. Bon appetit!

1. Genova Delicatessen and Ravioli Factory • 1550 Trancas St, Napa • genovadeli.net

It might be called the Ravioli Factory, but it's the authentic Italian sandwiches that make this Napa deli a favorite among locals and tourists alike. Be forewarned, the lineups can be long. Check out their online menu and order ahead. That way you can roll up on your bike, grab your sandwich and be on your way quickly.

2. Napa General Store and Cafe • 540 Main St, Napa • napageneralstore.com

Along the Napa River is this eclectic local gem. Serving breakfast and lunch, it's a great place to fuel up before your ride or a nice midday stop when you need a break, plus at the General Store you can stock up on provisions. The wine bar offers tastings of local wines, some of which you can't find outside of California.

3. Tacos Michoacan • 721 Lincoln Ave, Napa

Chances are you'll have enough change in your jersey pocket to pick up a taco from this popular food truck. Mouthwatering meals start at only \$2 and are made with the freshest ingredients. Beef tongue and beef cheek are among the most popular choices, but authentic vegetarian options are available too.

4. Ca' Momi • 610 1st St, Apt O, Napa • camomi.com

Authentic Italian cuisine is served up hot here at this popular and affordable Napa favorite. Local, organic produce are the stars of Ca' Momi's signature dishes that are best enjoyed al fresco. Save room for dessert – the melt-in-your-mouth pastries can be enjoyed guilt-free after a day of epic cycling throughout the valley.

5. Small World Cafe • 928 Coombs St, Napa • worldcafenapa.com

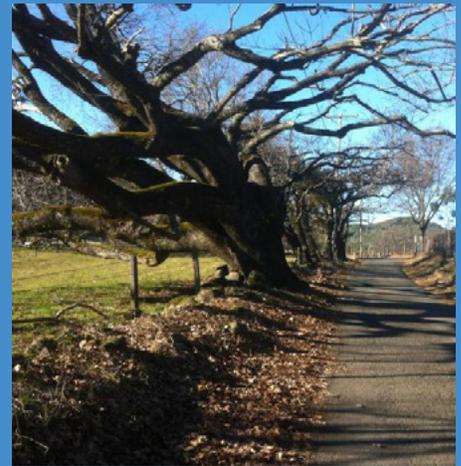
Local blogger Napa Valley Vegan rates Small World Cafe among the best vegan-friendly cafes in Napa Valley. Their selection of pitas, like falafel and grilled zucchini, are sure to please. Order online and grab a pita for your ride!



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3 TIPS TO TRAVEL WITH YOUR BIKE

While you can rent a top-quality road bike from Pure Adventures when you travel to California with us, there's something to be said for bringing your own bike along – you know how your bike handles on hills, it fits you perfectly, and if you are like some cyclists, you can't imagine riding anything other than your own trusty two-wheeled companion. There are tricks to traveling with your bicycle – read on for tips to make the process pain-free.



1. Contact the airline before booking your flight to find out costs and restrictions

The airline with the best airfare may not always be the best one to take your bike on. Budget airlines are notorious for inflated baggage fees, so be sure to ask before buying your plane ticket how much it will cost to take your bike along with you. It's the best way to avoid unexpected surcharges when you check in for your flight.

2. Practice taking apart your bike and putting it back together before your trip

It's a classic rookie mistake – dismantling your bike and not knowing how it goes back together. Before your trip, take your bike your local bike shop for a tune up and a how-to on how to pack your bike for air travel. Stock up on spare tubes, CO₂ cartridges and any tools you might need for your bike so that you don't have to search out for a mechanic on the first day of your trip.

3. Buy or rent the best bike carrying bag you can afford

There are an endless number of carrying bags on the market, and it may be tempting to buy the cheapest one (those bags are expensive!) But in this case, cutting corners is not the way to go. You'll want a bag that transports your bike in a manner that requires the least amount of disassembly, is lightweight enough to make toting it around airline terminals manageable and durable enough that it can stand up to the inevitable bumps and bangs from baggage handlers. If buying a bag is not in your budget, consider renting a bag.

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3 WAYS TO SAVE ON YOUR VACATION

Pure Adventures is all about offering a good value! Our trips are premium offers in which we include more than other similar 'sounding' offers and why you pay a little more but get so much more! You will be surprised how much less than some of the 'big guys' our self-guided trips come in. Savings are always nice, and so we give you some options to save on what we think is already a great deal. Getting our Enews or following us on social media will alert you to deals.

1. Travel with friends and family

If you can organize your friends or family, you can start to ask us about some savings! The larger the group, the better. Pure Adventures can economize on some services and pass the savings on to you. If you get a group of 10 paying guests, the 11th goes free. To note: this applies to our pricing as shown. If we quote a custom group, we will give you our best rate with economies built in already so that we can be competitive with other offers. Some group leaders, especially larger groups of 16 or more, do a lot of work and in exchange for that a group leader will build in their tour cost to be paid by the rest of the group. This is an incentive for people who want to make the effort to organize their own groups. We can adapt to your wishes!

2. Avoid weekend departures and travel in the off season

California and Napa are two of the most visited destinations in the United States, and during peak travel times of the fall, accommodations are at a premium; especially on weekends. Rather than starting your vacation on a Friday or Saturday, travel with us from Sunday through Thursday, when room rates are lowest.

3. Book at least 6 months in advance

The early bird gets the worm, or in this case, saves money!

- Right now we're offering a special \$150 discount on our California tours if you ride with us before October 31, 2015.
- Book a 2016 tour and get the 2015 rate.
- Book before December 31, 2015 we will offer an additional \$25 per person savings.

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4 WEIRD THINGS TO PACK IN YOUR BAG

There are the obvious things you should bring – bike, clothes, travel documentation and toiletries – and then there’s the odd ball items that you’d never think to pack. Read on for our favorite bike travel hacks (and you’ll wonder how you ever traveled without them before).



1. Glasses case

An old glasses case is just the right size to stash tire levers, multi-tools and your CO₂ cartridges. This keeps them separate from your tubes to avoid accidental punctures.

2. Contact lens cases

An old contact lens case doubles as a travel size container for chain lube, sunscreen or chamois cream, which you can then tuck into your pannier or jersey pocket. Just remember to fill the contact lens cases upon arrival at your destination rather than before your flight.

3. Old water bottle

Rather than jamming your jersey pockets full to the point that they are uncomfortable, make use of an old water bottle by turning it into a place to stash tubes, energy gels, cash or bike tools.

4. Resealable plastic bags

Don't leave home without a few extra clear resealable plastic bags and always tuck one into your pocket before your ride. That way if you get caught in the rain, you have a safe place to store your phone, camera and maps.

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ABOUT US

Pure Adventures has been a pioneer in popularizing the self-guided cycle touring travel concept for travelers from around the world. Pure Adventures has expanded and grown its offers by focusing on the 'local experience' which is at the essence of its "Pure" name. Pure Adventures only uses the expertise of locals for guides, route development, sites to see, people to meet, where to eat, shop and experience life as a local would.

The self guided concept is our expertise and is the 2nd Pure element for the client - it puts the traveler in control and in contact with the destination much more than if a professional guide is handling everything.

At Pure Adventures, we are full time, year round working on our tours and their perfection for our clients. We have been at this since 1994. Our knowledge, experience, and professional commitment set us apart. We also try to emphasize our accessibility - by email, phone, and web. We will respond, and a real person will help you! We are there to help with detailed questions, and to help with your overall trip plans outside of a tour you are planning with us. In the future, we intend to remain on the cutting edge and develop our accessibility, routes, and services to make them even better for our customers.

Contact us to learn more or to book your self-guided cycling vacation to California
1-800-960-2221 or info@pure-adventures.com



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