

About Randonnee Tours

Randonnée Tours offers self-guided cycling and walking tours in North America, Europe and beyond – leading the way in self guided travel since 1989.

A self-guided vacation with Randonnee is a fully organized travel package that combines the freedom of traveling on your own with meticulously planned routes, exploring admired and unique destinations, staying at distinctive hotels with access to local on call support when needed.

A Randonnee Tour is a sophisticated and active style of travel for independent travelers.

Contact us
1 800 242 1825
info@randonneetours.com

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Fact Sheet

Randonnee Head office: Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Included on all trips: bikes, accessories, accommodation, luggage transfers, detailed route instructions, maps, all breakfasts, some dinners, local area manager support.

Top selling bike trip for 2010: Provence Cycling

Top selling multi-sport trip for 2010: Gulf Island Multisport

Top selling hiking/walking trip for 2010: Dordogne Walking

Newest trips: Amalfi Coast walking and Croatia cycling 7 days

Sales increase in 2010: 40%

Number of Area managers: 26

Number of countries: 8 and growing

Number of trips offered: 87

Number of hotels partnered with: 250

Length of trips: Trips vary in length, from 4 days in the Loire valley to 14 days Camino de Santiago

Average number of towns and unique sites visited on one trip: 16

Oldest historic site visited: Glanum in Provence possesses an impressive triumphal arch, erected between 10 and 25 AD.

Average price of an 8 days tour with B&B hotels: 1230 usd per person

Average price of an 8 days tour with Classic hotels: 1620 usd per person

Average price of an 8 days tour with Luxe hotels: 2780 usd per person

Average number of kilometres/ miles biked per day: 48 kilometres / 30 miles

Average number of kilometres/ miles walked per day: 15 kilometres / 10 miles

Average number of kilometres/ miles travelled per trip: 336 kilometres / 208 miles

Brand of bike used for most trips: Cannondale and Trek
Randonnee owns its fleet of bikes in each region. Randonnee offers hybrid, racing, tandem and mountain bikes depending on the region travelled.

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Staff Picks

Best cooking class: In Ostuni, Puglia Cycling, Italy

Best winery: Olivier Leflaive– Puligny Montrachet, Burgundy Cycling, France.

Best ride: Gorge du Nesque – Haute Provence Cycling, and Provence Cycling, France.

Best walk: Path of the Gods in the Amalfi Coast Walking, Italy

Best kayaking: Kayaking in the Gulf Islands Multisport, British Columbia, Canada

Best B&B: L'Eveche, Provence Cycling, France

Best Classic Hotel: Le Clos d'Amboise, Loire Valley Chateaux Cycling, France

Best Luxe Hotel: Ballynahinch Castle, Connemara Cycling, Ireland

Best view: from Caesar Augustus Hotel in Capri, Amalfi Coast Walking, Italy

Best restaurant: Le Zie Trattoria Di Perrone Anna Carmela in Lecce, Puglia Cycling, Italy

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About self guided vacations

Randonnée has been North America's leading specialist in self-guided active tours since 1990. Each of Randonnée's self-guided cycling, hiking, walking and multi-sport tours are personally designed by Randonnée's staff and dedicated regional managers. We operate all of our own trips so there are only good surprises.

All trip logistics are seamlessly prepared in advance and in exacting detail so that our travellers can focus on the more important parts of the trip ~ cycling or walking, taking that stunning photo, selecting a perfect wine, or wandering an ancient castle.

The Randonnée advantage

Decide on the country or region you'd like to explore, choose an activity, pick a date and Randonnée does the rest:

- meet-and-greet with one of our staff upon arrival
- all hotel accommodation with hand-picked hotels, lodges and bed-and-breakfasts
- inn-to-inn luggage transfers
- all breakfasts and typically two dinners
- fully-equipped bicycles
- a trip itinerary, with room for flexibility
- detailed route instructions for scenic country roads and trails
- maps with highlighted routes
- tips on sights and recommended restaurants
- historical notes and comprehensive trip planning materials
- emergency phone contact with a local area manager who speaks English and is available 24/7

Seek a balance between the freedom of traveling on your own and the support of a guided tour. Choose the travel dates; cycle or walk at your own pace. Let us take care of the details. Randonnée offers choice and flexibility. Choose the number of days of trip length, style/class of hotels and the number of miles. No other company delivers as much variety and quality.

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About self guided vacations

Accommodations:

With Randonnee, it is all about choice. Choose luxurious hotels such as Relais & Chateaux member properties in France, classic lodging that are one-of-a-kind finds or family run bed and breakfast inns. We hand-pick accommodation options and review them frequently to ensure they maintain the high standards that we expect.

Support:

Our self-guided tours provide behind-the-scenes support to your journey. Luggage transfers are always provided. If you have problems, help is always a phone call away.

Route-finding:

We supply you with detailed maps and route instructions including interesting side-trips, historical notes, plus contact phone numbers. Choose your own pace, and where and when to rest.

Activity:

Our walking and cycling tours are for active adults with a moderate level of fitness. Talk to us about the difficulty of each tour. For very fit cyclists we offer add-on hills and distances.

The Bikes:

No need to box your bike, and no extra rental fee! We provide the best - including TREK and Cannondale 21-speed hybrid and racing bicycles fully-equipped with handlebar bags, pump and repair kit.

Special Events, included:

On many Randonnee tours, we try to include something special that wouldn't be easy to find or organize on your own. Whether it be a cooking course in Puglia or a local guide/storyteller for a day in Ireland or a wine sommeliere tasting in Burgundy, France, we know that these little extras will make your trip that much more memorable.

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The Randonnee Story

Randonnee Tours was founded in 1989 and is owned by Robbin McKinney, who has spent 28 years in the active travel business. A prolific traveler first and foremost, along the way Robbin earned a Bachelor of Arts from Western University, London, Ontario, an M Sc. from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture in New York and has initiated several successful business ventures and philanthropic endeavors.

Robbin also owns Great Explorations, www.great-explorations.com, a leading tour operator of guided cycling and walking trips in Canada, United States, France, Italy, Ireland, Spain, Croatia, Costa Rica, Morocco, Turkey, Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand.

Robbin started his career as a guide for Butterfield & Robinson, leading luxury cycling and walking trips in France, Ireland, Portugal, Morocco, New Zealand and elsewhere. Between his years at B&R and Great Explorations, Robbin may hold the distinction of having guided more trips in more places for longer than anyone who has ever lead trips of this kind. Travelers with Randonnee benefit from both Robbin's experience and the collective knowledge of Randonnee's extensive local contacts and Area Managers.

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Press release

Season wrap up, review and celebration – sales up by 40% for Randonnee Tours

Vancouver, BC - December 8, 2010 – Canadian based company Randonnee Tours reports a 40% increase in sales for 2010. The company, providing self guided active vacations, has enjoyed several years of consistent growth. As well, evaluation forms for the year confirm the season was a success. Results show majority of all bookings were ‘extremely satisfied’, would recommend the company to others and will return for another trip.

“I am impressed with the results for our 2010 season. The effort from our staff both in Canada and in the regions we operate trips around the world was tremendous. We have hired additional staff, purchased new bicycles in several regions, expanded our trip offerings to some exciting new destinations and are eagerly anticipating further growth.” Robbin McKinney, President of Randonnee Tours.

For the 2010 season, Randonnee style of travel was popular with independent groups, families, couples and solo travellers. The youngest was an ambitious 18 months old, travelling with parents, booked on a Dordogne walking tour in France. Fitness level of travelers ranged from performance athletes to guests riding a bike for the first time since their youth. The new tours included Italy’s Amalfi Coast seven day walking tour and also British Columbia’s Gulf Islands hiking and yoga trips.

Randonnee’s Staff, travelled to Morocco in November to attend the industry event; PURE Life Experiences. PURE is a invitation only trade event, taking place over three days connecting private travel designers with suppliers from the luxury experiential travel industry.

Examples of customer testimonials:

* Canadian Rockies hiking - ‘We had a wonderful time in the Canadian Rockies. The accommodations were great, the food was delicious, and the hikes and views were incredible. I will gladly recommend your company to any one looking for an adventure abroad. I have been mentioning Randonnee already!’ M. & D. Auld, Greenwich, Connecticut

* Dordogne cycling – ‘I never ever thought I’d go on this type of trip but I must say I thoroughly enjoyed it. As a normally non-athletic person, I tell people that the bicycling part was the best part of the trip! The Dordogne Valley is magnificent and I don’t think we could have experienced it fully if we had been in a car or a bus! The sight, the smells, the medieval atmosphere...I could have stopped every 2 minutes to take a picture! Overall the best vacation ever.’ M. Douglas, Ontario, Canada

* Umbria cycling - ‘This was our second trip with Randonnee. We very much enjoyed the tour and hope to travel with Randonnee again. The cycling was beautiful, with the routes well-planned through varied terrain, mostly quiet roads, breath taking scenery, and beautiful, historic towns. All in all, great cycling in a spectacular region.’ R. Klein & L. Saffire, New York, United States

Randonnée Tours offers self-guided cycling and walking tours in North America, Europe and beyond and has been the leading specialist since 1990. A self-guided vacation with Randonnee is a fully organized travel package that combines the freedom of traveling on your own with meticulously planned routes, the finest hotels and local on call support. Randonnee operates all of their own trips so you can be certain on a consistency in experience, wherever you travel.

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Story Ideas

Wine lovers

Exploring a region by bike or on foot is about travelling at a different pace allowing time to take in the views, the smells and always stopping to taste the local wine. Randonnee organizes trips to many regions famous for wine like Tuscany, seductive with rich history of wine and tradition dating back to the 5th century. Or ride the ancient roads around Beaune, in Burgundy a region of pocket-sized vineyards, where Pinot Noir and Chardonnay flourish and wineries and hotels operate in abundance. Visit Napa Valley with vineyards that dot the landscape. Explore the Niagara Peninsula, home to nearly two-dozen wineries, and famous for its unique ice-wine.

Our travellers

They seek flexibility. The path less travelled. An experience they choose, with someone else doing the organizing. They like to explore with groups of friends, family or solo. Perhaps they're used to travelling on their own, but want the advice of an expert. They're a group of friends interested in a unique vacation with time catch up with each other, over active days of riding or walking/hiking. Maybe it's been a busy year and they want to escape to a simple life of early morning bike rides to medieval villages and farms. They're a busy family looking for time together before the nest empties out, with university-bound kids spreading their wings. An athlete looking for long rides with unfamiliar views and evenings consumed with culinary delights. Randonnee Tours accommodates all travelling types – not just the adventurous, curious or enthusiastic traveller. A Randonnee Tour is a sophisticated style of travel for the independent traveler.

Keeping it sustainable

As a company and provider of active travel packages, Randonnee Tours is acutely aware of the fragility of our natural environment. We are committed in all of our operations to minimizing our impact and donating in ways that will help causes that our team is passionate about. We offset our annual carbon dioxide emissions from luggage transfers for all self guided trips. We also provide all our guests with information on how to offset their flight emissions. We choose suppliers for business operations that demonstrate a commitment to the environment, including FedEx and Novex Couriers, Mountain Equipment Co-op and Hemlock Printing. Efforts, purchases and decisions in our Vancouver office are also in line with our passion for the environment. We make donations each year to the World Wildlife fund in support of various projects like global warming, Canada's Pacific, Canada's Atlantic, Forests & Freshwater, Mackenzie Valley, species protection and more.

Culinary adventures by bike

Balance occurs when efforts are even, i.e. calories consumed balance with calories burned. All of our trips whether travelling the mountain roads of the Canadian Rockies or exploring the medieval villages of Italy and France, include a culinary component. We embrace local recommendations and Michelin stars. Be it a cooking lesson at a local restaurant deep in a historic village, or a dinner invitation with a local family who also owns your bed and breakfast or an award winning restaurant in your luxurious hotel, we provide the best recommendations based on our personal experience, local insight, and our guests' favourite discoveries. Our staff will assist with reservations and more importantly introductions to the local culinary experts. For all Randonnee trips breakfasts are included, as well some dinners.

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