



LE SOLSTICE

22 June 2024
Dieppe -> Saint-Malo
340km



LE SOLSTICE | 340km

About a year ago – having worked for **The Bike Project** since 2019 – I decided I wanted to try and get together a group of friends/supporters/volunteers/present and former colleagues for a bit of a blowout-type bike ride. Celebrate the charity, celebrate the relationships (the new, the old, and yet-to-be-formed) it's helped create, and do something adventurous - **everyone welcome**.

It's not an official charity event, just an open invitation, even if that actually just means me doing it on my own 🙄

So here it is... **340km across Northern France, from Dieppe to Saint-Malo, ferry-to-ferry, on the longest day of the year.**

Date 22 June 2024
Start 4.30am
From Dieppe, Normandy
To Saint-Malo Brittany

[CLICK HERE for route](#)

I'd love it if you came too...

THE RIDE

What is there to say about the ride itself? It should be a really fun challenge... and hopefully a chance to push further than you've gone before in one day! Individually ambitious, without (and I can't stress this enough) being competitive.

340 kilometres, with 3,000 metres of elevation – so it's not completely flat, but really nothing too wild, given how far the whole ride is.

Setting off at 4.30am gives us a lot of time to take it easy, stop for loads of great food, stretch, hydrate and really enjoy every hour of daylight, up until sunset at 10.15pm.

And every rider will be encouraged to adopt a pace that's comfortable for them. I'll most likely be riding avg. 22-25km/h (moving speed) and taking lots of breaks along the way.

"YEP YEP – I want in, what next?"

1. Go ahead and book your travel (see below)
2. Book your accommodation (also below)
3. Join the WhatsApp group (yes, you guessed it -> below)

PLEASE NOTE - There is also the possibility of completing a shorter, 160km route – from Dieppe, and finishing in Caen. The benefit of this option is that you'll likely arrive in Caen in time for the 23:30 overnight ferry back to the UK (arriving 7am Sunday). [If you're interested in that option. CLICK HERE.](#)

TRAVEL

-> TO DIEPPE <-

DFDS runs three daily ferry crossings from Dieppe to Newhaven – Newhaven is 90 minutes from London by train (inc. change @ Lewes), and bikes do not need to be reserved in advance.

I have booked the overnight ferry that leaves Newhaven at 23:00 on Friday 21 June (£38).

[CLICK HERE to book Newhaven ferry](#)

-> FROM SAINT-MALO <-

Britanny Ferries runs one crossing per day from Saint-Malo to Portsmouth (leaving at various times) – Portsmouth Harbour is about 2 hours from London Victoria by train (direct) and bikes do not need to be reserved in advance.

I have booked the daytime ferry that leaves Saint-Malo at 10:30 on Sunday 23 June (£67)

nb. this arrives into Portsmouth Harbour at 18:20, the final London train leaves around 21:30.

[CLICK HERE to book Saint-Malo ferry](#)

ACCOMMODATION

Hotels are booking up for the summer holidays, so I would encourage you to move relatively quick on this one. I have booked the Ibis Budget in Saint-Malo for Saturday night (£75).

[CLICK HERE to book the Ibis](#)

Please don't feel obliged to go with this one if you don't fancy it – there are a bunch of other options.

The cheapest I could find online is the HotelFI Saint-Malo (if you've ever had the pleasure of this chain). It's £48 for a double room and is about 20 minute ride from the ferry terminal.

[CLICK HERE to book HotelFI](#)

SCRATCHING/DID NOT FINISH

'Scratching' aka 'did not finish'... it happens to the very best. Hopefully we all make it to Saint-Malo, but it's important to cover what your options are, should you – for whatever reason – need to call it a day before then.

We'll pass through (or very close to) a few well-connected towns en route.

YVETOT – 50km – we don't actually pass through here (20 min ride from the route | 10 min taxi) but from Yvetot you can get a train back to Dieppe (via Rouen), should you need to.

LE HAVRE – 100km – Brittany Ferries run four crossings per week from Le Havre to Portsmouth... after we set off, the next available crossing is on Monday 24 June 2024. There are also regular trains to Paris from Le Havre, these take about 3 hours, and it is possible to take a bike on board.

CAEN/OUISTREHAM – 156km – if you make it to Caen, the ferries back to the UK (Portsmouth) run far more frequently.

VILLEDIEU-LES-POÊLES – 251km – making it to Villedieu gives you a few options... there are regular trains to Paris (3 hours), and a slightly more complicated journey to Saint-Malo (3 trains | 5 hours). But infrastructure in the town itself for supply/rest/repair.

AVRANCHES – 275km – here, things begin to get a little easier, should you need to stop. A 1hr45min bike-friendly train (via Dol de Bretagne) gets you into the warm embrace of Saint-Malo.

The final 56 km (after 285km) is a very flat cruise along the coast.

It's also worth mentioning that Normandy (the first half) does have a well-connected network of regular coach routes and you may be able to put your bike in the hold at the driver's discretion... so as a last resort, it's a decent option.

If you have a mechanical issue and need some roadside assistance please message on the WhatsApp group! It may be that another rider close-by has the tool/expertise to haul you out of the situation you're in. However, this support is not guaranteed or expected of any other rider.

DISCLAIMER (have to do this) – all of the above info is based on internet research done in January 2024. It's correct to the best of my knowledge, but if it turns out to be wrong, I'm sorry. If you want to be double-sure, please scope these options yourselves. And just to be clear – you are responsible for yourself throughout the ride, and everything that goes along with that – so please prepare accordingly.

Nb. If you'd like to take part but are anxious about the self-sufficient element of this ride, I would encourage you to organise with a friend and commit to riding together for the whole day. Additionally, if you'd like to do this, but are joining in as a solo rider, let me know via email and I'll do my best to buddy-you-up with someone in a similar boat.

SAFETY

I'll go into this in more detail with the riders that join the WhatsApp group – but the key points here are fairly straightforward:

- **HELMET** – pls wear one
- **LIGHTS** – bring multiple good ones, cause you don't know what might happen en route
- **WATER** – bring at least two bottles, ideally 750ML-1L ones – it might be mega hot
- **BIKE SERVICE** – consider getting a bike service in the weeks/days running up to the ride
- **NAVIGATION** – don't rely on others for the route. If you're able to bring a GPS (recommended) make sure the battery will last, if you're planning to use your phone for navigation, you'll likely need a portable charging pack to maintain power throughout.

THE BIKE PROJECT

The Bike Project has been going for a decade and in that time has repaired and donated over 12000 bikes to refugees and people seeking asylum across the UK, as well as teaching over 400 refugee women how to ride a bike.

Many people seeking asylum in the UK are forced to live on as little as £1.25 per day, without the right to work, and with no certainty around when their asylum claim will be processed. A bike can offer a vital lifeline - providing freedom, independence, and joy, as well as the means to access frontline services that would otherwise be out of reach.

The charity now donates 2000 bikes per year, runs a 2nd hand bike shop in Camberwell, and operates out of workshops in London and Birmingham.

[CLICK HERE to read the charity's latest Impact Report](#)

FUNDRAISING

If you are in a position to fundraise for The Bike Project, you can create a fundraising page on Raisely (The Bike Project's fundraising platform of choice).

[CLICK HERE to create your Raisely fundraising page](#)

If you're not able to raise funds, a voluntary donation for taking part would be much appreciated, [CLICK HERE to donate](#).

OTHER BITS

[CLICK HERE to join the Strava event](#)

[CLICK HERE \(or scan below\) to join the Whatsapp group](#)

Le Solstice | The Bike Project

WhatsApp group



WAIVER

This is an independently-organised event, that is in support of The Bike Project, and arranged voluntarily by an employee of The Bike Project. **This event is not coordinated by The Bike Project in any official capacity.**

Therefore, it is likely that I will request all members of the WhatsApp group to sign a waiver. This waiver will acknowledge that participants are engaging independently and at their own risk. The charity accepts no responsibility for any occurrences associated with, in preparation for, or during the ride itself.

Hope that all makes sense.

THANKS!! (please sign-up)

Patrick