

THE BIKE FLYER - A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



PEGASUS BIKE TOURS



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2018 Touring Season Starts in Solvang, CA; Spots Still Open for a Few Tours

As I send out this newsletter we are busy packing up for our first tour of the year of the 2018 season. We still have a few spots open on both our domestic and international tours. Be sure to check it out on the website on the [2018 Tours](#) page or the [Tour Status](#) page.

A Second Opportunity—2018 Western Washington Tour with COGS August 9-13

Last year we ran a very successful 7-Day Western Washington Tour with Pegasus. We are again leading a very similar tour for our local club (C.O.G.S.) here in Seattle. This year's version is fixed base 4-Day tour. They have a **few spots** left open so we've been asked to put it out to the Pegasus Tour Posse. This relaxing Intermediate tour is for those who don't need to climb a major pass or hill each day. In addition, by making this a fixed-based tour we eliminate the stress of getting up each morning and packing our bags. It provides you the freedom to just stay in the hotel if it's not your day to ride. Our base will be at the <http://www.laconnercountryinn.com/> in La Conner – once a sleepy fishing town, now a growing arts and crafts tourist center. Most of the routes are on quiet roads, though occasionally getting to our goal requires a few miles on a busy road. We call this tour Wheeling along the Water because each route travels along some part of our gorgeous Puget Sound coast.

For all the details and registration go to: <http://www.cyclistsofgreaterseattle.org/2018-western-washington-tour>. In order to register for this tour, you will have to join Cyclists of Greater Seattle, but the cost is minimal (\$16). Please note that you will start your registration process with COGS. Once you have completed that you will get an auto email directing you to a "secret" web-page on the Pegasus website where you will find the registration form and usual PayPal button.

PREVIEW: 2019 Belgian Ardennes Tour—July 6-17, 2019

We are incredibly excited about the 2019 Maastricht to Luxemburg Tour we just put together with our fantastic European tour leader, Francien. This amazing tour starts in the hills of the extreme southeast corner of the Netherlands and wends its way through the Ardennes Mountains to Luxemburg. This tour will have multiple day stays in three different countries: the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxemburg. We will also do a little riding in neighboring Germany.

The overall goal is to not only enjoy the magnificent scenery of this corner of Europe but to also ride some of the famous climbs and descents of three of the major European bicycle racing classics: the Amstel Gold, the Fleche Wallonne and Liege-Bastogne-Liege. This tour isn't for the faint of heart as most days we will be riding around 60 miles with one day at 75 miles and our total elevation gain per day will run from 2,500' to 5400' with some days offering options to add even a few more climbs. The climbs are mostly short and punchy but there are often several in a row. We will never get above 2,000'.

We will also enjoy riding on beautiful rural dedicated bicycle paths which meander through delightful rural countryside. Some of these are easy as they follow rivers or are converted rail-to-trails while others use steeper switchbacks to bring us to the top of ridges. When we're not following dedicated bike paths we are often on well-marked bike routes.

There will be two rest days on this tour: one on Day 4 in Stavelot, one of the oldest cities in Belgium, and the other on Day 8 in Bastogne which has a special meaning for many Americans as the major battlefield of the last German offensive in WWII, the Battle of the Bulge. (The old movie, Battle of the Bulge from 1965 though not entirely historically accurate will give you a flavor of the importance of Bastogne.) There are several very interesting museums and monuments to this epic battle in Bastogne.

We end our tour in Luxemburg which, with its old city center and its extensive Napoleonic era fortifications, has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We believe this is one of the most interesting tours Pegasus has put together, one you definitely don't want to miss.

PROVISIONAL ITINERARY ON NEXT PAGES

PRELIMINARY ITINERARY (subject to modification):

Day Zero - Saturday, July 6: Valkenburg - We will meet in Valkenburg, just outside of Maastricht for a short orientation meeting and dinner.

Day One - Sunday, July 7: Valkenburg Loop 1 – 60km/573m (37mi/1880')



Our first riding day kicks off in Valkenburg where we will start the day with coffee and the famous Limburgse vlaai. This sweet breakfast cake is unique to this province stuck between Belgium (think waffles and chocolate) and Germany (think wonderful cakes and pastries). After breakfast we will get our bikes fitted and start exploring the road bicycle racing mecca of the Netherlands. The UCI World Championships have been held here 5 times and the annual [Amstel Gold Race](#) (AGR) one of the monuments (and the only Dutch one) of the Spring Classics. In addition to the professional version there is an amateur [tour version](#) of the AGR. We will take on the 60km course option. We will brave five of the famous AGR climbs: Lange Raarberg, Fromberg, Koulbergseweg, Sibbergrube and probably the most famous the Cauberg (the traditional finish line of the AGR). For those who haven't had enough there will be an option to 3 more of the famous climbs: the Geulhemerberg, the Maasberg and the Adsteeg for a total of

100km / 1354 m.

Day Two - Monday, July 8: Valkenburg Loop 2 – 109km/1650m (68mi/5400')

For those who think of the Netherlands as being as flat as a pancake, will find today's course a real eye-opener. Today we tackle the climbs that make up the middle of the Amstel Gold Race (AGR) <https://www.klimtijd.nl/fietsroute/amstel-gold-race>. These include the Cauberg, the Wolfsberg, Loorberg, Schweiberg, Camerig, Drielandenpunt, Gemmenich, Vijlenerbos, Eperheide, Gulpenerberg, Kruisberg, Eijserweg, Sint Remigiusstraat (de Huls), Vrakelberg en Sibbergrubbe. With a couple of real hairpin turns thrown in, we will end up at the Drielandenpunt (1058') – the highest point in the Netherlands and where the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium all meet near Vaals. **For those who think this might be a bit too much, there will be the option to by-pass some of the early climbs** and perhaps visit the American Cemetery and Memorial in Margraten where 8300 are buried in a beautiful and peaceful locale which stands in sharp contrast to the deadly chaos on that same soil in WW II.



Day Three -Tuesday, July 9: Valkenburg – Liege - Stavelot – 118km/1035m (73mi/3397')



After yesterday's climb fest, we start with the gentle descent back to Maastricht and then we follow the Meuse (Maas in Dutch) as it meanders its way through to Belgium to Liege <http://meusecyclroute.eu/meuse-a-velo/liege-maastricht>. We leave the Meuse behind as we slowly but steadily climb along the Ambleve River. As we spend the entire day following these two rivers, the day is relatively easy. For the mountain goats, who just can't get enough we have the option of climbing some of the famous climbs of another monument, Liege-Bastogne-Liege (LBL). You can test your legs on Chambralles (9% average) and the famous Redoute (only 1 mile in length but with a short section of 21%) <https://www.klimtijd.nl/regio/ardennen/kaart>. Our final destination for the day is Stavelot.

Day Four -Wednesday, July 10: Rest Day #1 in Stavelot

We are sure everyone will enjoy a rest day after these first 3 days of the tour. Stavelot is one of the oldest cities in Belgium. Its many old buildings and monuments attest to its rich and momentous past. The town had a major role in the Battle of the Bulge including the battle over the bridge across the Ambleve. Among the many tragedies of that battle was the massacre of over 100 civilians. Stavelot is also the home of the famous Formula One Belgian Grand Prix and the Spa 24 Hours endurance race. There's a museum showcasing some of these race cars in the old abbey of Stavelot which also serves as the cultural heart of the city. <http://tourismestavelot.be/>



Day Five -Thursday, July 11: Stavelot Loop 80km/1422m (50mi/4633')

Today, in our circuit around Stavelot, it's back to the climbs from the Liege-Bastogne-Liege classic bike race. We will ride via Trois Pont to Grand-Halleux where we pick up LBL-2018. We will climb Côte du Pont (2), Côte de Bellevaux (3), Côte de la Ferme Libert (4) and de Côte du Rosier (5) (see map [here](#)). We return to Trois-Pont where one could even add a few extra climbs on the way back to Stavelot (Côte d' Aisomont, Côte de Wanne en Côte de Stockeu). Since this is a loop around Stavelot there are again possibilities of shortening the route.

Day Six - Friday, July 12: Stavelot - Bastogne 73km/1252m (45mi/4109')



Today we ride from Stavelot to Bastogne, the turn-around point of the famous Liege-Bastogne-Liege. As you would expect, this too will be a hilly ride. Our route will take us via Manhay, Freyneux to Dochamps. Just over half way through the day's route, we will climb the Col de Haussire, the high point of the day (498m/1634'). We will then have a thrilling descent to La Roche-en-Ardenne. This summer haven attracts mountain bikers, kayakers, parasailers and other thrill seekers. It's also a great place to find a wonderful lunch. Unfortunately, the climbing is not over, as we climb 3 km up to the top of the Côte de la Roche en Ardenne. From there it's up the Côte du Barrage de Nisramont and the Côte de Herlinval-Warempage into Bastogne. It's definitely not going to be a piece of cake as we get to Bastogne.

Day Seven - Saturday, July 13: Bastogne Loop 97km/1400m (60mi/4586')

Today we will dip for the first time into Luxembourg. Our ride starts rather relaxed as we make our way northwest for over 20 km on the RAVeL dedicated bike path to Houffalize (<http://ravel.wallonie.be/home.html>). Houffalize is known as the mountain bike capital of Belgium. From Houffalize we will undoubtedly bring joy to the beer drinkers amongst us as we pay a visit to the famous La Chouffe brewery (<http://www.achouffe.be/en>). Re-energized we will tackle the undulations so common to hilly Luxembourg. Clervaux will make a nice place for our second stop of the day. We will again enjoy small paths with wonderful views of the surrounding fields and meadows. With little fanfare (will we even notice it?), we will return to Belgium and our hotel in Bastogne.



Day Eight - Sunday, July 14: Rest Day #2 in Bastogne

it's rest day #2. There is much to see and do in Bastogne (pop 15,000). There is the Church of St. Peter with its gorgeous vaulted ceiling and an old city gate from the middle ages. Bastogne was also the center of the last major German offensive in WWII – the Battle of the Bulge. There are a lot of museums and monuments to this epic battle fought in December of 1944. Nearby you will find the star shaped memorial built by the Belgians in tribute to the American Army and its allies (<http://www.bastognewarmuseum.be/home.html>). This memorial also offers a wonderful panoramic view. It's Sunday so there won't be a lot of shops open, but you will definitely find some lovely outside terraces for a cup of coffee, glass of wine or a stein of beer.

Day Nine - Monday, July 15: Bastogne - Luxembourg 97km/1149m (60mi/3770')

On today's route to Luxembourg, we will be using almost exclusively dedicated bike paths! Like here in the US, some of these are rails-to-trails. We will be riding through nature preserves enjoying sweeping switchbacks as we rise above the banks of the Alzette River. Along the way we pass through meadows and orchards and occasional old castle including Colmar-Berg, the residence of the Grand Duke of Luxembourg and his family. By the time we get to the picturesque town of Etelbrück, we will have done 2/3 of the distance and most of the climbing. It will be a great place to grab a bite to eat. From here we will follow the Piste Cyclable (cycle path) PC15 which will take us almost all the way to Luxembourg – Ville through relatively easy undulating landscapes.



Day Ten - Tuesday, July 16: Luxembourg Loop 70km/773m (44mi/2535')



The border between Luxembourg and Germany is in part the famous Moselle River. Today we will ride through some undulating hills and small villages to get there. We will follow that border to Schengen. The town itself is nothing special but there is a monument to the Schengen Agreement signed in 1985 which abolished border crossing between the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany and Luxembourg making it a single visa zone. Schengen is also our second three country corner (think Four Corners in the SW US). In this case France, Germany and Luxembourg. After a relatively steep climb out of Schengen we will follow the PC-11 back to the city. Since this is a relatively short day there should be some time to explore the city that afternoon.

Day Eleven, July 17: Luxembourg

Our incredible tour has come to an end. Today after one last breakfast together we will head our separate ways.



**MORE PICTURES ON THE NEXT
PAGES**



2019 Central Idaho Date Change

Due to a scheduling conflict we had to change the dates for the 2019 Central Idaho Tour. Please note it's now August 17-25.

2019 PEGASUS BIKE TOURS PROVISIONAL SCHEDULE			
DATES	TOUR	LOCATION	LEVEL
April 6– April 14	Central California Tour	San Luis Obispo, CA	Intermediate/Adv
May 2 -May 6	4-Day Eastern Washington	Omak, WA	Intermediate/Adv
May 16-May 20	4-Day Omak Hill Country	Chelan, WA	Intermediate/Adv
June 8–June 22	Bruges-Paris Bike & Barge*	Bruges, BE	Easy/Intermediate
June 29-July 6	Amsterdam-Maastricht Bike & Barge	Amsterdam, NL	Easy
July 7-July 17	Maastricht-Luxemburg Ardennes Tour	Maastricht, NL	Intermediate/Adv
August 17-25	Central Idaho Tour	Ketchum, ID	Intermediate/Adv
September 6-15	Western Colorado Tour	Grand Junction, CO	Intermediate/Adv
<u>International Tour Registration (Except Bruges-Paris*) - August, 2018</u>			
<u>Domestic Tour Registration - October, 2018</u>			