



CLASSIC

AMA 100TH ANNIVERSARY ALPS CHALLENGE 2

“ Launching from Milan, Italy and heading to Switzerland and the Eastern Alps of France, this tour is a supreme challenge! ”

RIDING DAY 1 : MILANO (MILAN) - PONTRESINA

Standard Route (276 km / 171 miles)

Leaving Milan might be a bit of a hassle but it won't take us long to reach the Autostrada. We exit just before Bergamo and before you know it we'll be in San Pellegrino Terme, at the foot of our first mountain pass today. San Pellegrino is the place where the famous mineral water of the same name comes from.

The passes we tackle today are largely unknown, the roads are tiny and twisty. The mountain landscape that surrounds us is spectacular! In the afternoon, we cross into Switzerland and ride up Bernina Pass, a member of the Top 40. It offers a stunning ride and lots of magnificent scenery. Keep the tight Swiss speed limit in mind, race direction is on patrol around here quite frequently!

Today's destination is Pontresina, a pretty little town not far from St. Moritz. Take a stroll up and down its Mainstreet and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere!

Highlights:

#1: Passo del Vivione (1828 m)



Passo Vivione, for sure, belongs to one of the most spectacular passes in the region of Lombardy. Once you are on this road it is hard to believe: this is the local's official and the only connective road between the Valle Pasco and Edolo in the northeast and the Valle di Scalve in the Italian province of Bergamo.

If you thought you've already seen the narrowest roads on earth, you haven't been riding over Passo Vivione yet.

#2: Bernina Pass (2328 m)



Switzerland is surrounded by several countries of the EU. It is only natural that quite a number of passes are bordering to some of these countries. Such as the Bernina pass. It has its starting point in the Italian town of Tirano, meandering across to Pontresina in Switzerland on the other side. Don't miss out on a coffee stop on top of the pass to enjoy the view of the Bernina mountain glaciers.

RIDING DAY 2 : PONTRESINA - ANDERMATT

Standard Route (263 km / 163 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (265 km / 165 miles)

PONTRESINA - ST. MORITZ - JULIER PASS (2284 M) - SILVAPLANA - MALOJA PASS (1815 M) - CHIAVENNA - PASSO DELLO SPLUGA (SPLÜGEN PASS) (2115 M) - PASSO DI SAN BERNARDINO (2067 M) - ARBEDO-CASTIONE - BIASCA - LUKMANIER PASS (1914 M) - DISENTIS / MUSTÉR

Today's ride takes us deep into the heart of Switzerland, where the country's highest and most spectacular passes loom. After taking a quick picture of St. Moritz, the city of the rich and beautiful, we check Julier Pass off our list, have a coffee with a view, and come down again on the same side. Spluga, our next pass, is one of the most spectacular in the entire Alps, especially on the southern side, where some hairpin turns are built into the sheer rock face! To cool down and regain our strength, we have lunch at the top, right next to a beautiful lake. Passo del San Bernardino is next, another gem in Switzerland's crown of passes. Due to the modern road leading through a tunnel, traffic on the old road is mild and the riding fun is endless. It ends, though, when we reach the valley floor and ride the long connecting stage to St. Gotthard Pass, the last one for today. Don't worry if there's not enough time left today to ride the old cobblestone road known as "Tremola"; tomorrow, on our rest day, we'll ride it for sure!

Highlights:

#1: Julier Pass (2284 m)



The Julier Pass (German: Julierpass, Romansh: Pass dal Gügülia, Italian Passo del Giulia) (el. 2,284 m, 7493 ft) in the Albula Range of the Alps connects the Engadin valley with the rest of Graubünden. At its summit, the pass crosses the watershed between the basins of the Rivers Rhine and Danube. The Julier Pass lies between Piz Lagrev and Piz Julier. Remains of a Roman temple and cart tracks were

found and illustrate its importance in Roman times.

#2: Passo dello Spluga (Splügen Pass) (2115 m)



By climbing the 2,115 m (6,940 ft) Splügen pass you add a true riding highlight of the Swiss-Italian Alps to your pass collection. The challenge of the Italian south ramp lies in its tight switchbacks, which partially run through short but narrow avalanche tunnels. The north ramp on the Swiss side offers pure riding pleasure on its numerous turns, too. Already 2,000 years ago, the Via Spluga, as it was called back then, was considered to be one of the most important connections between the Swiss canton Grisons and Italy. Goods were transported, and people were traveling from Thusis via the Via Spluga to Chiavenna and vice versa. The construction of the road as we know it today was finished in 1822. But after the tunnel through the nearby San Bernardino was completed, the Splügen pass has lost its importance, nowadays. Much to the pleasure of us motorcyclists.

#3: Passo di San Bernardino (2067 m)



In 1770, the original path over the Bernhardin mountain was finally turned into a "paved" road. The top of the pass was relocated to cross over the natural mountain saddle at its lowest point. At 2,067 m (6,780 ft), a mountain guesthouse was opened, which today serves as a restaurant and popular meeting point for motorcyclists. Once you've reached the top of the pass, you probably will feel like you've landed on the moon, standing in between the bare rocks and the mossy ground. The road down into the Tessin is twisty with some tight hairpins. On your ride down the mountain, you can find the new Bernardino highway, crossing over or under your road again and again. What a pleasure for us to be able to enjoy a quiet ride on this little frequented pass road.

#4: Andermatt



Andermatt is not only famous because of a scene in the James Bond movie Goldfinger (1964) - it is most famous as a ski resort. Since 2009 a big tourism project is underway - with construction of a golf course, hotels and a big sports- and leisure-center. For us motorcyclists, Andermatt is the perfect base to explore the mountain passes. Susten-, Grimsel-, Nufenen-, Furka-, Oberalp- and St. Gotthard-Pass are just around the corner!

RIDING DAY 3 : ANDERMATT

Standard Route (160 km / 99 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (221 km / 137 miles)

DISENTIS / MUSTÉR - OBERALP PASS (2044 M) - ANDERMATT - REALP - FURKA PASS (2431 M) - GLETSCH - GRIMSEL PASS (2164 M) - GUTTANNEN - INNERTKIRCHEN - GADMEN - SUSTEN PASS (2224 M) - FÄRNIGEN - WASSEN - GÖSCHENEN - ANDERMATT - GOTTHARD PASS / VIA TREMOLA (2106 M) - ANDERMATT - OBERALP PASS (2044 M) - DISENTIS / MUSTÉR

Andermatt is surrounded by fantastic pass roads, some of which are in the top 40. Four of them are part of this exciting rest day loop.

We start with the Furka Pass, where almost 60 years ago James Bond was already out and about in his Aston Martin. This is also the site of the Rhone Glacier, which we will visit, of course. Afterwards, the Grimsel Pass awaits us with its lake at the very top and with the impressive rocks smoothed by glaciers. Here we take a break, then ride north, and finally, turn onto the Susten road. It is almost 50 km long, leads over the Susten Pass, and is one of the best rides the Alps have to offer.

Shortly after, we're back in Andermatt, where you can spend the rest of the afternoon relaxing in the sun with a beer. If you still feel like doing another pass, you can ride up to the lighthouse (!) on the Oberalp Pass or take a closer look at the old Gotthard road. Both are right on your doorstep. Andermatt, you've got it good!

Highlights:

#1: Furka Pass (2431 m)



Furka pass, same as the passes Nufenen, Grimsel, Susten, and Gotthard, belongs to the figure-eight circuit of passes around Andermatt. Besides the countless curves, meandering over the mountain pass through stunningly beautiful scenery, Furka pass has, compared to all the other passes, a unique feature to offer. From its western slope, you can access the Rhone glacier and actually go for a short hike, which leads you right into the crystal blue inside of

the glacier. Unlike the easier-to-ride west side of Furka pass, the east side offers a more challenging ride with narrow twisting roads.

In 1964, the pass became world-famous thanks to James Bond. The car pursuit over the pass is one of the most legendary film scenes of all time!

#2: Rhone Glacier



Imagine coming out of a hairpin turn and suddenly you are right in front of the Rhone Glacier – a dream? No, it's true! At least it used to be true, now you actually have to walk to see the glacier's tongue. Don't miss this opportunity for nice pictures and a walk into the blue world of glaciers. Each year, for the past 170 years, a new cave needs to be dug into the ice because it keeps moving by approx. 4

inches. At the beginning of the season in June, the cave measures more than 330 ft. but the glacier will be melting down by approx. 15 ft. during the summer. The melting water from the Rhone glaciers runs from here into the Lake of Geneva and then further on to the Mediterranean Sea down at Marseille, France.

#3: Grimsel Pass (2164 m)



The scenery in the Swiss mountains seems to be amazing no matter where you go. Grimsel pass sure is no exception, especially with its out-of-this-world beautiful northern side. The gigantic mossy rocks, the glacier lakes, and its impressive hydroelectric power stations guarantee unique pictures. Whether from the top of the pass at 2,164 m (7,040 ft) or from the small peninsula on lake Grimsel, you

shouldn't miss stopping and enjoy the pass road and the scenery. Like many of the passes of the Alps, Grimsel pass used to be a mule track before proper roads were built across the mountain ranges. In 1894, the construction of the Grimsel mountain road was completed. After the construction of the hydroelectric power stations between 1920 and 1950, it was expanded into the road we can enjoy today.

#4: Gotthard Pass / Via Tremola (2106 m)



Gotthard pass, respectively the Via Tremola, is probably the most famous and historically the most important road monument in Switzerland. It has always been an important north-south traverse and can even be traced back to Roman times. The old Gotthard mountain pass between Göschenen and Airolo was built 1827-1832. At its most spectacular section, the world-famous cobbled road

ascends 300 m (1,000 ft) over a stretch of 4 km (2.5 mi) and 24 switchbacks. Even though, nowadays, the main traffic runs over the new Gotthard pass road, the historical Via Tremola, still today, hasn't lost its attraction among motorcyclists. The cobble stone pavement same as the mile stones still exist in the remarkably good condition of the last reconstruction of 1951.

RIDING DAY 4 : ANDERMATT - CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC

Standard Route (271 km / 168 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (309 km / 192 miles)

DISENTIS / MUSTÉR - ANDERMATT - REALP - FURKA PASS (2431 M) - GLETSCH - PASSO DELLA NOVENA (NUFENEN PASS) (2478 M) - ULRICHEN - MÜNSTER-GESCHINEN - FIESCH - BRIG - VISP - SIERRE - SION (SITTEN) - COL DE LA CROIX DE COEUR (2174 M) - VERBIER - SEMBRANCHER - COL DES PLANCHES (1411 M) - MARTIGNY - COL DE LA FORCLAZ (1527 M) - VALLORCINE - COL DES MONTETS (1461 M) - ARGENTIÈRE - CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC

We climb Furka Pass once again this morning and ride down to the Wallis, a bilingual province. Then we follow the course of the Rhone for a while, losing elevation but gaining temperature instead. By the time we reach Sion, it's going to be quite warm and you'll be happy to take a turn and quickly head up a beautiful, twisty mountain road. 1,700 vertical meters (5,580 ft) later, we arrive at the top of Col de la Croix de Coeur, a tiny and largely unknown pass that offers gorgeous views from the top.

Past Verbier and Martigny and across another couple of (smaller) passes, we eventually reach Chamonix-Mont-Blanc, France's most famous winter resort town. Giant Mont Blanc towers over the city, an impressive sight. Chamonix is a beautiful town full of historic buildings, cozy cafes, and interesting shops. You'll love it!

Highlights:

#1: Passo della Novena (Nufenen Pass) (2478 m)



The Nufenen is one of the five passes, which form a figure-eight circuit of passes around the region of Andermatt. Compared to the passes Gotthard, Furka, Grimsel, and Susten, the Nufenen belongs to the less frequented ones. Not because this pass would be less interesting, far from it. It is simply because of the time it takes to ride all five passes of this amazing region. Good for those who still take the time to ride Nufenen. You will enjoy the view from the less frequented top of the pass, which, at the same time, represents the border between the cantons of Ticino and Wallis.

#2: Rhône Valley



In the mosaic of Swiss cantons, the Vallais (Wallis) accommodates one of the most isolated districts of the Alps: The Upper Rhône Valley between Furka Pass and Lake Geneva. This wide fissure, almost completely cut off from the main part of German-speaking Switzerland, has been kept busy for 2,000 years by traffic through the Great St. Bernhard and Simplon Passes. Here you can expect unforgettable high mountain landscapes dotted with chalets, old style farm houses and raccards or mazots, small barns perched on piles and used as granaries or storehouses.

#3: Col de la Croix de Coeur (2174 m)



On the list of the 40 highest asphalted passes in the Alps, the Col de la Croix de Coeur is a new addition, as it was only given a tarred surface in 2018. Since then, the famous winter sports resort of Verbier can also be reached from the Rhone Valley without getting your tires dirty, provided you are in control of your vehicle because the road is extremely narrow and unsecured. From the top of the pass opens a magnificent view of the snow-covered Valais Alps, which is best appreciated from the terrace of the small mountain restaurant that bears the same name as the pass.

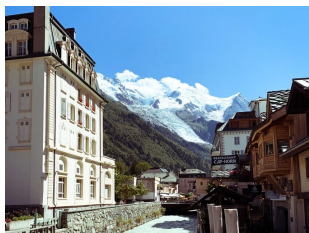
RIDING DAY 5 : CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC

Standard Route (228 km / 142 miles)

Today you can sit back and relax: there is no need to leave Chamonix. The city features countless shops and cafés, a lively pedestrianized center, and of course some stunning mountains in the neighborhood. If the conditions are right, you can (and should!) catch the gondola to Aiguille du Midi, an exhilarating experience. Or when was the last time you were in a gondola, almost a mile (!) above ground? On a clear day, you can even see the Matterhorn from up there!

If your main goal is collecting mountain passes, you are welcome to follow your tour guide on a ride across six small but interesting mountain passes west of Chamonix. Col de l'Arpettaz is probably the most challenging one and when you're up there, you'll feel much higher up than you really are.

This ride will keep you busy for most of the day!

Highlights:**#1: Chamonix-Mont-Blanc**

Chamonix is France's mountaineering capital and is located at the foot of the famous 12,000 ft. Aiguille du Midi at a point where the glacial valley of the Arve widens out. The dome of Mont Blanc (White Mountain) is visible from the town.

#2: Téléphérique de l'Aiguille du Midi (Cable car Aiguille du Midi)

At 4,808 m (15,777 ft), Montblanc is not only the highest but also one of the most famous mountains in Europe. One of its many peaks is named Aiguille du Midi and can be accessed by a funicular that covers almost 2,800 meters (9,200 ft) of elevation from Chamonix. Built in 1955, it was the world's highest funicular for many years. Once at the top, you can enjoy a spectacular 360° panorama of the French, Italian and Swiss Alps. At an altitude of 3,842

meters (12,605 ft), you can walk out onto a terrace, which is then extended by a glass cabin, the "Skywalk". Do you dare to walk on this platform with 1,000 meters of emptiness below you?

#3: Col de l'Arpettaz (1.581 m)



This pass is one of the small, still largely unknown crossings of the French Alps. Yet it can boast 37 spectacular hairpin bends to overcome the altitude difference of just over 1000 meters between Ugine in the Val d'Arly and the summit. Except for hikers and cyclists, little traffic is to be expected here.

At the top of the pass, there is a serviced refuge where you can enjoy the solitude of the high Alps.

#4: Col des Aravis (1.487 m)



The Col des Aravis is not particularly high, but nevertheless belongs to the famous Route des Grandes Alpes and connects the municipalities of Flumet and Saint-Jean-de-Sixt in the Savoy Alps. The 23-kilometer route is well-maintained and extremely scenic. You can enjoy great views of the surrounding Alps all the way to Mont Blanc rising to 4,807 meters in the east.

The top of the pass is usually very well visited in summer; there are a few nice cafés and a pretty stone chapel, which is a great photo opportunity.

RIDING DAY 6 : CHAMONIX-MONT-BLANC - AOSTA

Standard Route (266 km / 165 miles)

Montblanc, the "white mountain" boasts the highest peak in the Alps. From Chamonix, the views are dramatic and along our route today we can frequently catch a glimpse of not only this peak but of many other ones.

Two Top 40 passes are on our agenda today, the Petit and the Grand Saint Bernard, or as the Italians call them, Piccolo and Gran San Bernardo. While the former straddles the border between Italy and France, the latter connects Italy to Switzerland. Both are historically significant and both offer an outstanding riding experience.

Aosta, our destination today, is the capital of the region of the same name. It is just around 50 miles long and represents the smallest region in Italy, by land area as well as by the number of inhabitants. Aosta city features a pretty, pedestrianized historic old town.

Highlights:

#1: Cormet de Roselend (1967 m)



Cormet de Roselend is a very scenic motorcycle road. For a while, it takes you along Lac de Roselend, a reservoir created by one of France's largest dams. It was completed in 1961 and today helps generate about 600 MW of hydroelectric energy. The road culminates at an elevation of 1,967 m (6,453 ft), offers many beautiful views, and even more beautiful curves!

#2: Col du Petit Saint-Bernard (Little St Bernard Pass) (2188 m)



21 hairpins lead you to the top of the Col du Petit Saint-Bernard, offering outstanding scenery. Take the time to enjoy it! The Little St. Bernard Pass (Italian: Colle del Piccolo San Bernardo) is a mountain pass in the Alps connecting France and Italy. Its saddle is at 2,190 m (7,178 ft) above sea level. It is located between Savoie (France) and Aosta Valley (Italy) to the south of the Mont Blanc Massif, precisely on the main Alpine watershed. Although interrupted by a road that runs through it, the pass is the site of a stone circle measuring 72 m (236 ft) in diameter. A standing stone once stood in the middle. The age could not be determined exactly so far, but coin finds prove that the ceremonial site dates back to the Iron Age and was possibly a ceremonial site (725 BC-450 BC). A Roman temple dedicated to Jupiter was later erected nearby, along with a Roman mansion serving travelers along the pass. Supposedly, the Carthaginian general Hannibal used this route, too. The stone circle was partly restored in the 19th century, now carrying the statue of the Holy Bernard de Menthon.

#3: Col du Grand Saint Bernard (Great St Bernard Pass) (2469 m)



The most direct way to get from Martigny to the Aosta Valley is the Col du Grand Saint-Bernard (Italian: Colle del Gran San Bernard). This two-lane, well-built pass road was one of the most important Alpine crossings until the road tunnel was built in 1964. The fact that the pass has been used since the early Iron Age can be proved by finds along the road. Later, the Romans built a mule track, which was first completed as a passable road in 1905. The present pass was named after Bernard of Aosta, who also founded the hospice at the top of the pass and established the breeding of the famous Saint Bernard rescue dogs. Probably the most famous person to have crossed the Great St. Bernard was Napoléon Bonaparte in 1800.

RIDING DAY 7 : AOSTA - VARESE

Standard Route (247 km / 153 miles)

The last day of our tour has arrived, and we return not all the way to Milan, only to Varese, a move that saves us a lot of time and trouble in traffic. But don't worry, it still won't be a "gentle finish". Over 250 km of curves await us, many of them narrow and tight. We ride through the Italian "Pampa", from village to village, where there is little traffic. There is a lot of traffic around Lake Maggiore, which cannot be avoided if you want to see and experience this beautiful lake. And that's what we want!

So, we start out by riding along the Valle d'Aosta, then take a look at the massive fortress of Bard, and eventually turn onto a tiny side road. It takes us to coffee, lunch, and finally to Lake Maggiore, where the Alps and the Mediterranean south meet like nowhere else. We cross the lake by ferry and make one last detour because the finish line is close, but we don't want to go there yet. We want to enjoy one last rush of curves and find it at Passo Sant'Antonio. If you still have chicken strips on your tires by the end of this tour, you can only blame yourself...

Highlights:**#1: Fortress of Bard**

The fortified complex of Fort Bard is located on a rocky prominence above Bard, in a narrow gorge at the entrance to the Aosta Valley. The fort has been used for millennia to control the historic route between Italy and France. The building we can visit today, however, was built in 1830 by King Karl Albert of Sardinia-Piedmont. Before, on May 14, 1800, a 40,000-strong French army was stopped by 400

Austro-Piedmontese soldiers at Fort Bard. They held the pass for two weeks, completely ruining Napoleon Bonaparte's plan of making a surprise attack on the Po Valley and Turin. When he heard the news, Bonaparte then gave the order himself that the fort should be razed to the ground.

Fort Bard has been completely restored after many years of neglect. It reopened as the Museum of the Alps.

#2: Lago Maggiore




This lake is one of the most beautiful areas in Italy and certainly in Europe. Lake Maggiore with its rugged shores is surrounded by the high rocky walls of the Lepontine Alps. Several provinces border the lake: The western shore belongs to Piedmont (the provinces of Novara and Verbano-Cusio-Ossola), the eastern shore belongs to Lombardy (the province of Varese), and the northernmost part of Lake Maggiore extends thirteen kilometers into the Swiss canton of Ticino. There it reaches both its lowest point above sea level and the southernmost point of Switzerland.

#3: Passo Sant'Antonio (1489 m)



Not only is this pass a fantastic ride but also clearly a challenge for the motorcyclist. The narrow road features very tight corners all the way up from the Lago Maggiore side. Running through a forest, the switchbacks on the other side join the main road near the village of Arcumeggia. When riding the Passo Sant'Antonio you should always keep in mind that on this road, traffic runs in

both directions!



We wish you a wonderful tour.

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