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# JUST LIKE RIDING A BIKE!

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Road biking through undulating vineyard topography, and during the more stationary moments, unwinding at the glorious [Château St. Pierre de Serjac](#); as far as active press trips go, this was set up to be highly compelling! In the event, it was \*so\* compelling that I scribed a piece for Women's Health on the affair (which should go live very shortly, so do keep your eyes open). The experience was extremely well balanced; road biking is unexpectedly demanding from an aerobic perspective, and the Château St. Pierre de Serjac is just a heavenly sanctuary in which to relax; that exquisite channel in the middle where those parameters meet is what governs a highly successful active break! As an aside, if you do read this and think 'hmm, I could quite imagine myself giving that a shot', I would strongly urge you to wear padded bib shorts, as road biking saddle soreness is orders-of-magnitude more intense than gym-induced muscular soreness! 🤢. Find my [full review](#) of Road Biking and Château St. Pierre de Serjac below.



**'Just like riding a bike...'**

The initial impressions whilst mounting the carbon-fibre road bike in the majestic grounds of Château St. Pierre de Serjac are that this will be a wobbly uncoordinated affair; yet under the watchful eye of [VéloRoo's](#) Steve Prokop, an outrageously infectious Aussie cycle master who oozes pure optimism, you're 'on your bike, mate' just as soon as you've clipped up your cleats! The technical gear, aerodynamic body stance and padded 'bib shorts' are a world away from the ladylike push-bikes adorning Instagram's grids, with peonies, puppies and wicker baskets aplenty; this discipline is a whole lot more badass, and that impression hits you fast!



### Social Climbing!

Life observation; an uphill climb can be a rewarding struggle. Quite so here; towards the top of the sweeping hill scapes of the undulating Languedoc, the quads scream for mercy, brimming with lactic acid. With the help of a friendly peloton in tow, you push through it and reach the crest, whereupon a powerful sense of elated achievement washes over you like a glass of Château Les Carrasses 2015. Much like HIIT, road biking shifts between intense bursts of activity in the dreaded anaerobic zone, and relatively calm active recoveries during descents, which keep the heart rate elevated, as well as remaining gentle on the joints. Throw in some friends and a casual Strava-led 'stats' competition, and it's a compelling way to see this breath-taking part of the world!



## Recover hard!

After 40 gruelling miles on the road, the Château delivers the holy trinity of revival; i) refuel with classic Mediterranean fare, ii) recuperate with spa time, and iii) restore with an unbroken night's sleep. The menu is light and governed by what's growing in the chef's organic garden; their 'Pan-fried John Dory Fillet with Butternut Squash Risotto & Organic Vegetables' ticks the lean protein box and the veggies provide the complex carbohydrates the body needs post cycling (Pro-tip: it would be folly to overlook the fresh flaky croissants pre-cycle). The restaurant terrace shares a vista with the spa, surveying the rolling vineyards beyond, festooned with flowers, herbs and aromatics; a magnificent accompaniment to a Moroccan Hot Argan massage from the heavenly Cinq Mondes Spa, where the 'pumping' (focussed stroking) of soft tissue, both longitudinally and laterally, helps ward off cycle-induced DOMS, leads the body to relax and release endorphins which lift the mood and de-stress the mind. This, in turn, guarantees a night of fluffy sleep in the cosy, château-chic rooms with their all-enveloping beds. Here, you recover harder than you cycle.





## The Descent

Anyone who knows the exhilarating feeling of skiing down a slope, wind in your face, adrenaline coursing through the veins, blue skies and nature's stunning scenery passing you by; cycling feels much the same.

Steve, who cycles 3-4 times a week can hit speeds up to .....km/h. Whilst a beginner (depending on the slope) might be at the fairly lower speed it feels very fast indeed.

## The Bicycle Community

Whilst cycling you'll pick up on some road bike lingo and there is a real sense of community, all of whom take their passion very seriously. The lingo revolves around elevation, speed, distance, gear, equipment and technical details. What is quite striking is how cycling attracts all ages and all fitness levels. Everyone is truly welcome and everyone has a different story as to why they started cycling; amongst those I heard, 'I wanted to be fitter for my children', 'I needed to lose weight', 'I knew I needed to improve my cardio but after knee surgery, I couldn't handle the impact of running...'; 'I wanted to get outdoors as I was sick of the gym'. Ultimately, road biking ticks a lot of boxes - it allows you to get from point a to point b, it allows you to discover new places, it's practical, cost-effective (depending on the bike you get) and tackles many municipal challenges. Unlike golfing for instance, which requires an expensive membership the road is totally free.



I hope this has been an interesting journey down to the South of France with me, and that it's given you cause to consider 'saddling up!'

Faya x

