



Why cycling is the fitness trend of 2019, and where best to spin outside of the gym

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Inspired by Egan Bernal's Tour de France win? Have FOMO over fitness app Strava's 42 million global users? Or just want to take your street-style cycling shorts out for a real-life ride? Vogue hits the road in the south of France



the south of France is known for its breezy, [Mediterranean coastline](#), epic vineyards and hillside; and the Languedoc region is particularly special, steeped in history and relatively untouched. Just an hour from the nearest airport, Montpellier, the roads are wide, lined with oaks and virtually traffic-free: easy to explore at leisure (or at speed, if you're shooting for personal bests) on a bike. And when it comes to measuring your cycling statistics, Strava is the most popular fitness app you need to know about. This June, it was reported to have [42 million users](#), adding around a million new users every month. After the endorphin high of Strava "likes"—plus the exercise—it was time to head back to the château to rest and relax.

In 200 acres of vineyards, [Château St Pierre de Serjac](#) is *the* place you want to end up after riding too many miles. With all the decadence of an F Scott Fitzgerald novel—1920s vintage furniture, gilded mirrors and chandeliers—plus the luxury non-negotiables of spa, pool and tennis courts, it's a Francophile's dream. As all good [fitness influencers](#) advocate, movement is best kept balanced with indulgence; think wine from the [local estate](#), followed by copious amounts of coffee and croissants the next morning.

It's not *quite* enough to convince me to take up cycling full-time when I'm back home. For those who want to give cycling a go, *Vogue* tapped Strava for its top four recommended routes for influencers around the world:

1. UK: London to Brighton

Distance: 86km

Elevation: 1,056m

A ride through the London suburbs that stretches into the English countryside, this route has quite a climb, but ends up right on the seaside. After a stroll along Brighton's iconic pier and a fish-and-chips pit stop on the beach, you can always opt to take the train back to [London](#).

2. Berlin, Germany: Havel Loop

Distance: 89.3km

Elevation: 806m

If you're after a fast but fun ride try the Havel Loop—a ride that takes you south of [Berlin](#), through Potsdam down to the beautiful village of Caputh, before looping back up to the city. Alternatively, catch a quick ferry across the Havel, landing in Werder, and take one of the easy-to-find bike routes into Brandenburg.

3. Barcelona, Spain: Parc del Laberint d'Horta

Distance: 44.8km

Elevation: 1,026m

This is a short but challenging ride that will take cyclists from central Barcelona to the hilly northwest outskirts and back again. A great ride for the weekend or a free breezy afternoon.

4. Sydney, Australia: Eastern Beaches

Distance: 41.1km

Elevation: 872m

This 40km ride through Bondi and its eastern suburbs offers views of some truly breathtaking beachside homes, as well as the Royal Botanical Gardens. A scenic route, it makes a fine morning cycle.

Vogue travelled to France with [Chateau St Pierre de Serjac](#), for a three-night, all-inclusive cycling trip, from £960 per person, including bike hire and cycling guides

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