



NICK SANDERS LONDON - CAPE TOWN

London to Cape Town - FAQ's

Am I good enough to do it?

Have a chat with me and I'll help you decide. No point you coming along if you are nervous about overseas travel but our job is to help you feel comfortable about this. The journeys we do are amongst the greatest of all biking adventures and really are at the most affordable price. Of course it all needs careful consideration before you want to or are allowed to sign up. Most riders are better than they think they are. In my view it's a mental thing and if you think you're able to do it you usually can. We organize get together at my Expedition Centre where you come and talk things through with me and my team, without having to make a decision until you have thought it through properly.

Is it going to be really hard?

The riding isn't that hard once you get used to the different flow of traffic – often much less busy than a British road. Often there is no traffic at all, some wild life. The distances are not huge – 250 mile days – occasionally a bit more. There might be some piste – hard packed off-road riding – but it's nearly all tarmac. Look, if you're overweight, unfit, unfocused and unprepared you won't make it. If you have looked at your diet, sorted out your recreational habits, are prepared to get fitter and have taken your preparation seriously, you should accomplish this journey without too much trouble.

Why do I have to ride a Tenere?

Simply put, the big bikes can be too heavy or too tall for most riders, but the main reason we intend to use the same bike is mechanical harmony. If each rider carries a different part we can all use, we should be able to fix / weld / rebuild anything. The objective of this plan is not to be awkward, far from it, we want you to finish the trip either without mechanical failure, or a failure that can be fixed. Also, we can help you get a great Yamaha deal for a proven and well tested bike. If a bike breaks down and cannot be fixed because we simply do not have the spares, we will be forced to carry it to the nearest airport where it will have to be flown home at the riders expense. I want to prevent that.

What about food?

We pay for breakfasts and you sort out lunches and dinners, although breakfasts may not always be available where we are going – Nubian Desert, edge of the Congo! Food during the day is your decision but I will be recommending roadside food as the best for this project as it's cheap, hot, generally safe and nutritious. Dinners are usually together in a restaurant, unless you choose otherwise and unless we are camping.



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How much camping will there be?

Not much and only when there are no hotels or if the schedule's temporarily gone to pot – it does sometimes happen! Some riders, like me, share a love-hate experience about tented accommodation, others feel it a necessary part of the expedition experience but rarely we will have no choice. Sometimes in a desert there will be no hotels for miles and when a tent is better than some of the crummy accommodation that might be on offer. This is when our tents will be used. Again and again I will remind you that this is not a Thomas Cook tour. It's a unique expedition and like no other being offered in the world. There will be a maximum of 14 days camping and some nights on the edge of a game reserve in superb surroundings.

What's the accommodation like?

Very good wherever we can source it. Always clean with hot showers, sometimes much better than that. Sometimes if we are in the bush we will use 2 star hotels. As I say, the usual hotel will be good and clean but I also know of fabulous hotels all over the region.

Who are the support crew?

Well there will be myself, Nick Sanders, riding all of the way from London to Cape Town – 100% of the way. After 7 circumnavigations and 8 journeys up and down the Americas, I know a thing or two about adventure touring. Dr Caroline Taylor was one of the most experienced GP's in South London and a senior partner in her practice, she has for 4 years been working as an expeditionary medic, traveling with real bikers. Jim Wolfe has run a European-wide haulage business for more than 20 years, been on several trips with me, transports for the UN and is an expert in logistics. He will drive the back-up vehicle and will deal with the mechanicing. Both Jim and Caroline have worked with me on Timbuktu expeditions and Pan American Expeditions.

What happens if I break down?

We will do everything we can to fix your bike, and then more. We will stay up all night to keep you on the road. We can re-build a bike, we can weld it, in fact there is not a lot Jim cannot do. Either we work with it until it's either fixed or until regrettably we feel nothing more can be done. If there is a dealership nearby we will take you there but we are on a schedule so it may be a few days before this might happen. All I can say is that prevention is better than the cure. A well prepared bike ridden properly does not usually fail. If the bike is destroyed we get a police report as proof of damage or theft.

What happens if you decide you don't want to continue?

I doubt this would happen. We are great bikers with bags of experience and understand the perils of being away from home. We are a team and you will be pleasantly surprised how anyone I select to ride on this trip will help each other out. If whilst in Africa you do want to pack up and we can't make you feel better, or you have to return home for an emergency, we would be very sad to lose you and you would



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have to fly out from the nearest airport. After that we will arrange to fly or ship your bike home at your expense.

What happens if we don't want you to continue?

You'd have to be very naughty! Anything that contravenes local laws – dangerous riding, riding in such a way to endanger life, carrying contraband of any sort – and we'd have to have a little discussion. It's three strikes and you are out. Let's hope that doesn't happen. No one wants any single person upsetting the dynamics of the whole group. A contract will be signed by both parties, but everyone selected to ride on this project will be known by myself and handpicked. We are on the same team, so it's going to be ok.

What if I crash?

If we can fix the bike we will. If we can't we will find a dealer or bike shop on route that can and take it there. We will move mountains to keep you riding. But, if it's a write-off, then I'm afraid there is nothing more we can do and unless you buy another second-hand bike to keep you going, you will have to leave.

What if I get hurt?

Dr. Taylor will be on hand armed with splints and bandages and a first class medical kit. Whilst it is tempting to ask Dr C for a full consultation when you only have a headache, believe me, she is one of the best GP's in the business and knows exactly what to do when she is needed. If you require some hospitalisation then if it's just an overnight, we'll be there for you. Anything worse and your mandatory travel and medical repatriation insurance will have to kick in, whereby they will fly you home.

Who sorts out punctures?

You do. You bring your own plugs (or inner-tubes) and deal with it as it happens.

How does this expedition compare with the others?

You never criticise good competition and I say good luck to them. However, their trips are longer and correspondingly more expensive. £19 000 to do what you can do with me for £10 750 is an awful big difference – it's not like for like as you also have to take into account lost earnings. For that kind of money you can do 3 or 4 major expeditions instead of just one! Get the brochures. Do a cost comparison. Compare like for like. Read the small print. Not only are they more costly to do but also when you consider how much time you might have to take off work, or give up your job completely, it becomes a lifetime decision. Horses for courses I suppose and sure, you don't get the time off to hang around as with the other companies, but my trip is for hardy bike riders who just want to ride their bikes. This is a project designed to offer a real challenge. It does not pretend to be hard, it is hard. Anyone who has been on one of my journeys knows how difficult some days are, but they will also testify how amazing a good challenging adventure can be.



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What do I get for my money?

£10 750 is a lot but look around and compare prices. We even include all your flights, unbelievably, the others do not. We include hotels, breakfasts, a back-up vehicle with the best possible crew and in the true tradition of expeditions, a traveling doctor. And the best bit, you ride with me?! On reflection...that might not be the best bit, but put it this way, with my experience of riding around the world, there is not a problem I have ever come across that cannot be resolved.

What else do I get for my money?

Ah, well, as you know I have the support of some really excellent sponsors. Carole Nash, Yamaha, Touratech and Continental Tyres who all believe in their customers, so trust me to get some heavily discounted clobber for you to road test. No promises but I could save you a few hundred quid.

Will I get the chance to meet the other riders before we go?

Yes, there will be several get-togethers, including dinners and plenty of opportunities to sort out the detail of what tyres and bike to use, what to pack and how to prepare.

Who sorts out the paperwork?

We do everything except deal with visas and insurances. You sort out your travel insurance which must include repatriation, you get your visas but we know a company who will do this for you and you sort out any 3rd party insurances that we can get at the borders (of course we are there to help) but everything else is down to us.

How much luggage shall I take and who carries it?

As little as possible and you carry it all, every brass knocker bit of it. This is an expedition and to maintain its and your credibility, Expedition London – Cape Town is designed with true adventurers in mind and not a holiday tour for nervous people.