May 28 (Thursday) - depart USA

May 29 (Friday) - Arrive Geneva, meet group for coach transfer to Annecy. Bike assembly and/or rental fittings with Norbert, group welcome dinner and group announcements. (2 nts) www.accorhotels.com/gb/hotel-0538-ibis-annecy-centre-vieille-ville/index.shtml

May 30 (Saturday) – Built around the River Thiou, Annecy has been called the Venice of the Alps because of the canals that cut through the old part of town. The Palais de l’Isle is a castle in the center, built in 1132. The rue Sainte-Claire dates from the 17th century. The rue Royale with its numerous shops, gardens, and fountain is the heart of the town. Six miles to the west is a dramatic river gorge, Gorges du Fier.

May 31 (Sunday) - Bike to Chambery. The peaceful countryside of the Bauges Mountains provides a perfect backdrop for our ride to the historic capital of Savoie. Are your riding legs ready for the climb to the Col des Prés? Throughout history, Chambery has been both Italian and French. It lies in a valley surrounded by the Bauges and Chartreuse mountain ranges, providing a nearly 360-degree view of the French Alps. Highlights are architecture, vineyards, and markets with fresh produce from the Alps. (2 nts) www.hoteldesprinces.com

June 1 – If you didn’t stop at Aix-les-Bains on the way from Annecy, it may be worth a visit. On the eastern shore of Lac du Bourget, it’s known for its thermal caves, hot sulphur
springs, the Abbaye d'Hautecome, and a modern-art museum with works by Rodin, Degas, and Cezanne. Another option: Albertville, host of the 1992 Winter Olympics. The picturesque village of Conflans is above Albertville, just a few kilometers up the hill.

June 2 (Tuesday) – Bike to Lyon, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its historical and architectural landmarks. Historically it was important in silk production, and has recently developed a reputation as the gastronomic capital of France. Like Paris, the city is divided into arrondissements. The historic heart lies on both banks of the Saône, around the east bank's Place Bellecour, and the west bank's Primatiale St-Jean. There are bike routes to get us in and out of the center. Norbert will help. (3 nts) http://www.lagrange-city-lyon-lumiere.com/ June 3 – Vieux Lyon (“Old Lyon”) was the first protected historic and cultural district in France. We can tour the unique traboules, secret medieval passages made for the silk traders. The oldest major buildings date to the 11th and 12th centuries, but many of today's shops and cafes are in buildings that are even older. The three churches around which Vieux Lyon was built are St Paul (known for its bell tower and traboules), St Jean, Baptiste, and gothic St Georges.

June 4 – Museums, restaurants, monuments... the list of possibilities is long. Bike lanes abound in Lyon, but if you’re unsure of riding in traffic, you can take your bike on the TER trains to get in and out of the city. Norbert may also be able to provide shuttle service.

June 5 – Bike to Macon (Friday) - The foundation of the old city dates back to the 2nd century BC. During WWII Macon was the first town in the unoccupied zone libre between Paris and Lyon. (2 nts) www.chateaudelabarge.fr

June 6 (Saturday) – Northwest of Macon is the important Cluny Abbey, founded in the early 10th century. Saturday is market day in the pretty village of Cluny, which grew up around the abbey. Also of interest in the town is a national center for training purebred horses. On the way is the feudal castle of Berzé-le-Châtel. If you’d prefer a day off the saddle, consider a cruise down the River Soane.
June 7 (Sunday) – Bike to Beaune, one of the key wine centers in France, known as “the Capital of Burgundy wines.” Situated in the heart of prestigious vineyards, Beaune is also a city of art and architecture, with historical mansions and medieval half-timbered houses. Its history goes back more than 2,000 years. The Hôtel-Dieu is a museum in a 15th century almshouse, notable for its gothic towers and richly colored roofs. The Musée du Vin is housed in the former mansion of the dukes of Burgundy. (3 nts) www.postenajet.fr

June 8 (Monday) – Guided tour and tasting in Beaune (at Vin Sensation, Marché aux Vins or similar). Traverse the countryside on paved bike paths with varied landscapes, alternating between forests, fields and vineyards.

June 9 (Tuesday) – Along the Grands Crus Wine Road you can discover many sites and monuments worth a visit. Chenôve is home to 15th century winepresses of the Burgundian Dukes. The castle in Vougeot tells the history of winemaking by the Cistercian monks whose abbey is nearby.

June 10 (Wednesday) – Bike through the northern part (Côte d’Or) of the wine route to Dijon, the ancient capital of Burgundy, filled with elegant medieval and Renaissance buildings, cultural treasures, and excellent food/wine/shopping. The monumental Palais des Ducs et des États de Bourgogne, overlooking the central square dating from the 1600s, was home to Burgundy’s powerful dukes (2 nts) www.hoteldesducs.com/

June 11 (Thursday) – You may choose to ride, sightsee and shop in Dijon, or even go to Paris for the day (about an hour and a half by high-speed train). We will have a group farewell dinner.

June 12 (Friday) – return home (train to Paris or Geneva airport on your own) or extend your stay for further explorations. Plan reunion and next trip! A bientot!

*Note: These day-by-day routes and the activities listed are only suggestions. You are free to choose your own routes and activities within the framework of our itinerary. We will do many things as a group but you always have the option to ‘do your own thing’ if you wish. We’ll share ideas and recommendations within the group and plan accordingly. Hotels and group meals are booked per above, but last minute changes sometimes happen. We reserve the right to make slight changes in the itinerary based on weather, airline or train strikes, and other things beyond our control.

Kmo 11-6-14