Cycling Safety & Etiquette Briefing

Welcome Everyone!

Before we begin riding together, we want to take a few minutes to talk about safety, courtesy, and the shared habits that help make a Santana Adventures cruise enjoyable for everyone.

Our goal is simple: we want each of you to have a wonderful week of cycling, exploring, and relaxing—and we want everyone to return to the ship safely each day.

Santana Adventures rides are designed for experienced, thoughtful cyclists, but every destination is different. Road surfaces, traffic patterns, drivers, pedestrians, weather, signs, and local cycling customs can vary widely from what you are used to at home. A few minutes of extra awareness makes a big difference.

You Are Responsible for Your Own Ride

Each cyclist is responsible for riding within their own ability, comfort level, and judgment.

Please do not feel pressured to ride farther, faster, or harder than you want to. On most days, you'll have choices: long routes, shorter routes, and the option not to ride. There is no prize for doing the longest ride, and there is no shame in choosing an easier day.

The best ride is the one that lets you enjoy the destination and still feel good at dinner.

If you are tired, overheated, uncomfortable with traffic, unsure about directions, or simply not having fun, please make a smart decision early. Stop, take a break, ask for help, or use one of the support options available that day.

Helmets Are Strongly Recommended

Our team is not here to police what you wear on your bike, but we strongly recommend that you wear a helmet whenever you ride.

We want you to enjoy this cruise, and we want you to join us for many more adventures in the years ahead. A properly fitted, fastened helmet is one of the simplest ways to reduce the risk of a serious injury if something unexpected happens.

Please make the smart choice for yourself, your family, and the people who enjoy riding with you.

Follow Local Traffic Laws

You are riding on public roads, not closed courses.

Please obey local traffic laws, traffic lights, stop signs, roundabout rules, lane markings, and instructions from police or local authorities.

When in doubt, act like a vehicle and ride predictably. Drivers, pedestrians, and other cyclists should be able to tell what you are going to do before you do it.

That means:

- Ride on the correct side of the road.
- Stop where you are required to stop.
- Signal turns clearly.
- Yield when appropriate.
- Do not assume cars see you.
- Do not assume you have the right of way just because you are following the route.

Different countries treat cyclists differently. In some places, drivers are very patient. In others, roads may feel tighter or less familiar. Please stay alert and adapt to the environment you are in.

Communication While Cycling

Clear communication helps everyone ride more safely and comfortably.

When you are riding near others, please communicate early, calmly, and clearly. You do not need to narrate every pebble in the road, but you should speak up when your actions or something ahead may affect the riders around you.

Call out meaningful hazards such as potholes, gravel, sand, broken pavement, glass, parked cars, opening car doors, pedestrians, animals, or anything else that could surprise the rider behind you. If it

is safe to do so, you can also point toward the hazard so others know where to look.

If you are slowing quickly or braking harder than expected, call out “slowing” or “stopping” as early as you can. Sudden braking can create problems for the riders behind you, especially in groups, on descents, in towns, near intersections, or on narrow roads.

When passing another cyclist, communicate before you pass. A simple “on your left” or “passing” gives the rider ahead of you time to hold their line and avoid being startled. Give plenty of space, pass smoothly, and do not cut back in too closely.

If you are being passed, try to ride predictably and hold your line. You do not need to move suddenly or make room at the last second. The passing rider is responsible for waiting until there is enough space to pass safely.

Good communication does not need to be loud or dramatic. The goal is simply to help the people around you understand what is happening before it becomes a surprise.

Ride Predictably

Predictability is one of the most important parts of safe group cycling.

Please avoid sudden moves. Do not swerve unexpectedly, stop abruptly, or drift across the road without checking behind you.

Before you move left or right, pass another cyclist, stop, or change position, look first and communicate clearly.

Simple calls like “slowing,” “stopping,” “car back,” “on your left,” “gravel,” “hole,” or “clear” can prevent problems.

That said, please don’t over-shout every tiny detail. Use your voice when it helps the people around you ride more safely.

Passing Other Cyclists

Only pass on the left.

When passing another cyclist, do it with courtesy and enough space.

Call out before passing, usually with “on your left,” or the appropriate side for the country we are riding in. Give the rider time to hear you and hold their line.

Please do not squeeze past someone on a narrow road, bridge, bike path, or descent. Wait until there is room.

And please do not pass silently at high speed. That may feel efficient to you, but it can startle another rider and create unnecessary risk.

Riding Around Tandems

Many of our participants ride tandems, and they deserve a little extra room and awareness from the rest of the group.

Tandems are longer, heavier, and less nimble than single bikes. As we like to say: they turn like limos, so give them space.

Please do not crowd a tandem at intersections, tight corners, ferry ramps, café stops, bike paths, or when rolling through towns. They may need a wider line to turn, more room to stop, and a little extra time to get started again.

Avoid cutting closely in front of a tandem, especially before a turn, descent, stop sign, or traffic light. What feels like plenty of room on a single bike may not be enough room for a tandem team.

When passing a tandem, communicate clearly and give them enough space. When riding behind one, leave a comfortable gap so they can slow, turn, or stop without feeling pressured.

Tandem teams are usually very experienced, but the rest of us can make their ride safer and easier by giving them the room they need.

Descending

Descents are not races.

Please descend at a speed that is comfortable for you and appropriate for the road, traffic, visibility, weather, and surface conditions.

Leave extra space between riders. Do not overlap wheels. Do not pass unless you have a clear view, plenty of room, and a safe reason to do so.

Watch for:

- Gravel or sand in corners
- Wet pavement
- Potholes
- Drainage grates
- Animals
- Cars crossing the center line
- Sharp turns after scenic viewpoints
- Riders slowing unexpectedly

A descent that feels easy to a local cyclist may feel very different to someone seeing the road for the first time.

Climbing and Narrow Roads

On climbs, riders naturally spread out. That’s fine.

Please hold your line, especially if you are standing on the pedals or moving slowly. Be aware that other cyclists or vehicles may be coming from behind.

On narrow roads, ride single file when needed and give vehicles room to pass safely. Even if local drivers are patient, we do not want Santana cyclists creating a rolling traffic jam.

If you stop on a climb or scenic road, pull completely off the travel lane. Do not stop in the middle of the road, around a blind corner, or where another rider may not expect you.

Regrouping and Stopping

Please be thoughtful when stopping.

Do not stop suddenly in the road to check your GPS, take a photo, adjust clothing, or wait for friends. Move fully off the road first.

When regrouping, leave space for traffic, pedestrians, and other cyclists to pass. A dozen bikes scattered across a road, sidewalk, or café entrance can quickly become a problem.

At viewpoints, cafés, markets, and historic areas, please park bikes neatly and leave room for others. We are guests in these communities.

GPS Routes and Navigation

Our routes are carefully designed, but GPS is still a tool—not a guarantee.

Please pay attention to the road in front of you, not just the screen. GPS units and phones can lag, reroute oddly, or become confusing in dense towns, tunnels, forests, waterfronts, or areas with tall buildings.

If the GPS seems wrong, stop safely before troubleshooting. Do not stare at your screen while riding through traffic or intersections.

If you miss a turn, do not make a sudden U-turn in the road. Continue to a safe place, stop, check the route, and then correct course.

And remember: following the GPS route does not override traffic laws, road closures, construction signs, police instructions, or common sense.

Intersections, Roundabouts, and Towns

Please use extra caution in towns, intersections, and roundabouts.

These are often the places where small mistakes happen: a missed sign, a car turning unexpectedly, a pedestrian stepping out, or a rider following someone else without checking.

Each cyclist needs to make their own decision before entering an intersection or roundabout. Do not blindly follow the rider ahead of you. If one rider makes it through a light, stop sign, or roundabout, that does not mean the whole group should go.

When approaching a roundabout, slow down early, look for traffic already in the circle, and yield as required by the local rules. Choose your moment carefully and merge in smoothly. Do not rush into the roundabout just because the rider in front of you went.

Once you are in the roundabout, hold a predictable line. Avoid cutting across another rider, drifting suddenly, or changing your mind at the

last second. If you are riding near others, give everyone enough room to make their own decisions.

When exiting, signal or clearly indicate your intention when it is safe to do so, check for riders, cars, scooters, pedestrians, and curbs, and exit smoothly. Please do not stop inside the roundabout unless traffic or safety requires it.

If you miss your exit, stay calm and continue around again rather than making a sudden correction. It is much safer to take another lap than to cut across traffic or surprise the riders around you.

In short: slow down, yield, communicate, hold your line, and give each other space.

E-Bikes

E-bikes are welcome, but they require extra awareness.

If you are riding an e-bike, please remember that you may accelerate faster and climb more easily than riders around you. Be careful not to surge unexpectedly, crowd another cyclist, or pass too closely on climbs.

Use an assist level that matches the situation. In towns, crowded paths, tight turns, and group settings, lower assist is usually safer.

Battery range is your responsibility. Start each day charged, monitor your battery, and ask early if you have concerns.

We strongly recommend that all eBike riders read this page.

Photos and Sightseeing

We know the scenery is a huge part of the experience, and we want you to enjoy it.

But please do not take photos while riding unless you can do so safely and without affecting your control of the bike. The best photo is rarely worth a crash.

Stop safely, move out of the road, take your photo, and then rejoin the route when it is clear.

Also, please be respectful when photographing local people, private homes, religious sites, markets, children, or workers. When in doubt, ask people if they mind.

Courtesy to Local Communities

Everywhere we ride, we are guests.

Please be kind and patient with drivers, pedestrians, café staff, hotel staff, port staff, guides, and local residents.

A smile, a wave, or a simple thank you goes a long way, even when there is a language barrier. Better yet, learning just a few simple

phrases in the local language can do tremendous amounts to create goodwill and foster friendly interactions.

Words like “hello,” “good morning,” “good afternoon,” “please,” and “thank you” are small gestures, but they are often warmly received. You do not need to speak the language well. The effort itself shows respect, and it helps remind the communities we visit that we are not just passing through—we are happy to be there.

It is also fun. Learning a few local phrases gives you another way to immerse yourself in the places we visit. It can turn a simple café stop, market visit, or quick greeting on the road into a more personal travel moment.

Please do not block doorways, sidewalks, shop entrances, roads, or driveways with bikes. Be especially mindful in small villages, historic centers, ferry areas, markets, and busy waterfronts.

When visiting cafés, bakeries, shops, restrooms, churches, museums, or local attractions, please be courteous and patient. Large groups of cyclists can feel overwhelming in a small place if we all arrive at once, so step aside, make room for others, and treat local businesses as gracious hosts rather than service stops.

Santana Adventures has built its reputation by bringing thoughtful, respectful cyclists into beautiful places. Each group helps shape the welcome for the next one.

Riding With the Group

You do not need to ride in one large group, and in most places we actually prefer that you don’t.

Smaller groups are safer, easier for traffic to pass, and more pleasant for cafés and local stops.

Please avoid bunching up in a way that blocks the road. Ride single file when traffic, road width, or visibility calls for it.

If you ride with friends, keep track of each other, but do not create pressure for everyone to stay together all day. Different people ride at different speeds, stop for different reasons, and enjoy the day in different ways.

SOS Vans and Assistance

Santana Adventures operates SOS Vans with Pro Bike Mechanics. We do not operate traditional SAG wagons.

That distinction is important. Our vans are not intended to follow behind the group and pick up riders who chose a route beyond their ability, ran out of energy, or simply decided they were done riding. Instead, our SOS Vans are staffed by expert bicycle mechanics who are there to help with serious mechanical issues, breakdowns, emergencies, and situations where a participant truly needs assistance.

Our digitally directed vans can often reach you faster than a traditional SAG wagon, even if you are off course or unsure exactly where you are. But because our pro-techs need to prioritize serious problems, we

ask every cyclist to arrive prepared for the normal responsibilities of riding.

That includes being able to handle something as common as a flat tire.

If you do not yet know how to replace a tube, this is a great skill to learn before your trip. It only takes a few minutes to understand the basics, and a small investment in tools, supplies, and practice can save you a lot of waiting on the side of the road. Your local bike shop, a willing cycling friend, or a simple video tutorial can help you get comfortable before you travel.

We want you to be adventurous, but we also want you to know your limits and watch the time.

Each day, please choose a route you can comfortably finish with plenty of margin before the ship's scheduled departure. As a general rule, you should select a ride you expect to complete at least an hour before the ship is scheduled to sail. This gives you time for delays, wrong turns, photos, café stops, weather, fatigue, or the unexpected.

Santana encourages participants to finish the rides they start, even if the day gets tiring or a few raindrops appear. But if something goes wrong and you think you may need help, please call our SOS team early. A timely call gives us options. A final-hour call, especially from far out on the route, may not.

The best approach is simple: pick a route that matches your ability, carry the basics, keep an eye on the clock, and contact us early if you genuinely need assistance.

Hydration, Food, and Weather

Please begin each ride with water and any snacks you may need.

Even on shorter rides, weather can change. Cool mornings may turn into warm afternoons, and coastal areas, mountains, river valleys, islands, and shaded roads can all feel very different during the same ride. Layers of clothing may be necessary, especially on cooler mornings, so you can stay comfortable early and adjust as the day warms up.

Heat, wind, humidity, sun exposure, and climbing can affect people differently. Drink before you are thirsty and eat before you are empty.

In the event of high heat, we recommend using hydration or electrolyte powders in your water. Staying hydrated is important, but replacing electrolytes can also help you feel better, ride stronger, and enjoy the day despite the heat.

If you have medication, allergies, blood sugar concerns, or other health needs, please carry what you need with you. Do not assume the ship, van, or pharmacy will be nearby at the exact moment you need it.

The best approach is to start each ride prepared: water, snacks, layers, sun protection, and anything personal you may need to feel good from the first mile to the final turn back to the ship.

Mechanical Issues

Please check your bike before each ride.

At a minimum, make sure your tires are inflated, brakes work, wheels are secure, batteries are charged if applicable, and nothing is rubbing, loose, or making a strange noise.

If something does not feel right, tell us before you leave. It is much easier to fix a problem at the start than on the side of the road.

If you have a flat or mechanical issue during the ride, move to a safe place before stopping. Do not stand in the road while making repairs.

Alcohol and Riding

Please use good judgment with alcohol.

On some days, Santana may include a wine tasting, hosted beverage, or other opportunity to enjoy a local alcoholic drink as part of the experience. These moments can be a fun and memorable part of traveling, but participation is always your decision.

Only you know whether having alcohol during the day is a good choice for you, especially if you may still be riding afterward.

If you choose to participate, please do so thoughtfully and in a way that allows you to continue the day safely and comfortably. If you would not feel comfortable driving, you should not be riding.

Know When Not to Ride

Some days, the smartest choice may be not to ride.

That might be because of weather, fatigue, an injury, illness, road comfort, or simply wanting more time ashore. That is completely okay.

A cycling cruise is not a test. It is a vacation.

You are encouraged to make the choice that gives you the best overall experience.

Situational Awareness

You are on vacation, and we want you to relax, enjoy the ride, and take in the places we visit. At the same time, it is still important to pay attention to your surroundings.

Santana Adventures will never knowingly take you somewhere dangerous. We work hard to choose routes, ports, towns, and activities that are appropriate for our participants. That being said, we are still traveling through real places, not private resorts or closed courses.

Please take reasonable care with your surroundings and personal possessions. Keep an eye on your bike, phone, wallet, passport,

camera, GPS unit, and anything else important to you. Do not leave valuables unattended at cafés, viewpoints, shops, restrooms, beaches, or busy public areas.

When stopping in towns, markets, ferry terminals, train stations, tourist areas, or crowded waterfronts, stay aware of who and what is around you. This is not meant to make anyone anxious; it is simply good travel sense.

Situational awareness also matters while you are riding. Be aware of the cars, buses, trucks, scooters, pedestrians, and other cyclists around you. Do not assume a driver has seen you, understood your hand signal, or knows what you are about to do. Ride predictably, make eye contact when you can, and give yourself extra room when something feels uncertain.

A relaxed traveler can still be an attentive traveler. Enjoy the day, be friendly, take photos, explore, and have fun—but keep your eyes open and use the same common sense you would use anywhere else in the world.

Look Out for Each Other

Finally, please look out for one another.

If you see someone who looks confused, tired, overheated, injured, or stopped in an odd place, check in. If something seems wrong, let Santana staff know.

A great group is not just made up of strong cyclists. It is made up of thoughtful people who help create a safe, friendly, and relaxed atmosphere for everyone.

We are thrilled to have you here, and we are excited for the rides ahead.

Please ride safely, ride courteously, follow the local rules, respect the communities we visit, and make smart choices each day.

If we all do that, this will be the kind of week we all came for: beautiful rides, memorable places, good meals, new friends, and a ship full of happy cyclists at the end of each day.

Thank you—and have a wonderful ride.

Santana Adventures Traditions

Top Ten for First Time Participants

eBike 101 *(if riding an eBike)*