

WOMANTOURS

Orientation Meeting

1. **Name Tags:** distribute name tags to everyone. Please wear one yourself on your WomanTours t-shirt or jersey the first day. Don't distribute the blue packets yet.
2. **Welcome:** express to the guests how happy you are to be there and to have them there for the exciting week ahead. You might include something special about the trip that they can look forward to. It could be the weather, the lodging, the food, the route, a sightseeing trip or all of the above.
3. **Introductions:** introduce yourselves and then let the guests introduce themselves to each other and say why they chose this trip or why they chose WomanTours, etc. Ask if this is anyone's first trip with WomanTours. Be sure to pay these women extra attention as they'll be more nervous than the others.
4. **Start with Safety:**
 - a. Use the palm on the helmet signal to ask the van to stop when you need assistance, water, to put your jacket in the van, or for a lift, etc.
 - b. Use verbal signals and hand signals to each other and with traffic.
 - c. A properly adjusted bicycle helmet is mandatory at all times. If you are not sure about its adjustment, ask for assistance.
 - d. Be visible by wearing bright clothes.
 - e. Use common sense and courtesy when cycling.
 - f. Riders must obey all rules governing vehicular traffic on public roads, and stop at all stoplights and stop signs.
 - g. We do not condone the use of **Ipods or headphones** while riding your bike.
 - h. Use hand signals when turning or stopping. Point out road hazards to others.
 - i. Bicycle riding must be done as far to the right hand side of the road as is practical and safe except when making turns. Ride in a single file on all roads except when passing.
 - j. Keep your speed under control on the down hills. Use both brakes simultaneously. Check brakes to make sure nothing is loose.
 - k. Ride defensively and stay at least six bike lengths behind vehicles.
 - l. Always pass another cyclist on her left and let her know you are passing.
 - m. Keep a safe distance behind other bicycles.
 - n. Drafting is not prohibited nor is it recommended unless you are experienced with drafting. Do not draft without the other rider's knowledge.

- o. Always make your left turns from the center of the road.
 - p. Be wary of sand and gravel when riding.
 - q. To help insure the safety of all, carry identification and emergency information.
 - r. Drink water before you are thirsty. Eat before you're hungry.
 - s. If you should encounter **dogs**, do not allow them to run along side or in front of you - they are unpredictable. Stop and speak firmly with a "no" or "go home" or "stay". If the dog isn't wagging its tail, keep your bike between you and the dog and slowly walk away.
5. **Liability Release Forms:** Hand out the forms with pens and ask everyone to read and sign the releases. A copy of the same form was mailed to each of them in her tour confirmation packet prior to the tour. As each woman gives you her signed copy, give her a blue packet. Then you'll know that you have signed releases from everyone. There is a special copy of the release if anyone is averse to WomanTours using her image in our photography or marketing materials.
6. **Blue Packets:**
- a. Begin with the **What to Expect** sheet, which gives information about meals, the trailer, and logistics. Guide phone numbers are now only listed on this sheet.
 - b. Provide guests with the **1920 combination** to locks on trailer doors.
7. **Beverage cooler:** ask for suggestions. Let them know they are free to avail themselves of soda, juice, beer, or wine in this cooler.
8. **Clothing:** talk about layering. Advise them what to take with them each day based on weather conditions.
9. **Lodging:** explain that rooming lists have already been created and that they will be changing roommates each time we change hotel. We try our best to rotate evenly, but some women come with travel partners and some as singles. Check in for most lodgings are 2:00 - 4:00pm. Remind them that we pay for room only. Any other room expenses are their responsibility. In some cases, for each person to have her own bed, we have to use a pull-out couch or cot (roll-away-bed) in a room. Ask them to be considerate in rotating around who sleeps on the mattress or cot.
10. **Dinner:** remind guests that they must pay for alcohol consumed at meals. We will try and make arrangements with the server to handle this on an individual basis. You can order whatever you want at meals, but please eat whatever you order.
11. **Cue Sheets:** Go over the first day's route. First, teach the guests how to read the distances and cues. Explain the abbreviations (~~SS~~, ~~SL~~, ~~RR~~, R, L, T, Y) Indicate to them where they can expect the lunch stop to be. Point out the Hotels & POIs (Points of Interest) listed along the right side of the route's map.

12. **Ride With GPS:** Guests now have the option to access our cue sheets and maps on their phones or Garmins by downloading the RideWithGPS phone app and accepting the “event invitation” sent to their e-mail. The app gives audio and visual cues as they ride, but we still discourage use of headphones (*they can hear cues by turning up the volume on phone*). If they are interested in using RideWithGPS and haven’t set it up yet, they can refer to our detailed “How To” handouts. Remind guests that it is okay to stick with the printed cues if they prefer and that they can come to you with any questions.
*****As of 2021:** Please discourage guests putting their phone on airplane mode. This makes it difficult to reach them. Using their data can be avoided by downloading the routes ahead of time in WIFI and using the routes under the “offline” tab (under Library → offline).
13. **Breakfast:** inform guests of tomorrow’s breakfast time, when to bring down their luggage, and estimated time of departure. Come dressed ready to ride. Explain that the van and trailer will leave about 45 minutes behind the last rider.
14. **Snacks:** will be available at the trailer after breakfast. Be sure to make your own bag of GORP and to take fruit and an energy bar with you for the ride.
15. **Early start** is recommended because traffic is usually lighter in the early morning, and winds often increase as the day progresses.
16. **SAG support:** let guests know they are free to get in the van at any point. Ask them to let you know if they are thinking about Sagging at some point in the day ahead. We want them to feel comfortable getting in the van to SAG and not as if it is a punishment or sign of failure. We have only one SAG vehicle, which cannot always be available for everyone when the need arises. We will do our best!
 - a. **Signal for stopping:** tap the top of the helmet.
 - b. **Signal for OK:** a steady thumbs up or nothing.
17. **Water:** inform guests of the importance of drinking water the night before a ride, the morning of a ride, during the ride, and after the ride. One water bottle per hour during riding is a good rule of thumb. Dehydration is a cumulative effect and it is very difficult to catch up once you are behind in consumption.
18. **What to carry on the bike:**
 - a. Spare tube or patches, tire levers and a pump.
 - b. Two full water bottles
 - c. Rain gear
 - d. Everything you think you might need for the day including ID and money.
 - e. Safety Triangle – We ask that everyone strap a triangle to her body or to her bike on the rack bag or seat post. It helps to

identify our group as well as to make everyone more visible to traffic.

19. **Assurance:** this is very important. Many people begin to get worried about the logistics on top of their insecurities about being able to ride the distance, mix with other people, deal with traffic, etc. In your easygoing, confident manner, assure them that we have done this many times and that you as leaders will be on hand to help as much as possible and that all will go smoothly. In your personal way, convey the message you are aware that this is their vacation and you want to play a part in making it a very special time.
20. **Luggage Tags, Buffs or Socks, Map Holders and Triangles:** hand out 1-2 luggage tags to anyone who needs one, 1 buff or socks, and a triangle to each person. They'll need to return the map holders after the tour. Encourage them to take the safety triangle home and use it. If they don't want it, we will take them back and reuse them.