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# And so it begins (2013 Tour de France trip planning)

View Final road stage TdF 2013 in a larger map

It's still six months off, and the actual routes haven't yet been announced, but there's enough information out there to figure out where it's going, how to get there, and where to stay. Above is my first shot at figuring out the final road stage of the TdF.

The plan is to leave on Thursday, July 11th, arriving in Geneva the next day, then take a train to Avignon, a couple hours to the south. Saturday I'd like to do a short ride up to Orange and visit one of the best-surviving Roman Amphitheaters and shake the legs loose before the biggest ride of the trip, Mont Ventoux, which takes place on Bastille Day, a the French version of our July 4th. After that we travel to Grenoble where we'll be positioned for the various stages in the Alps, including the one shown on the map above. The three biggest days for us ("us" being my son and I) will be Ventoux on the 14th, Alpe d'Huez on the 18th, and the Col du Madeleine on the 19th. From Grenoble we should have access to all stages from the Time Trial in Embrun on the 17th to the final road stage in the map above... using a car only for the Alpe d'Huez stage. The secret? Local trains! A concept we've proven on several past trips. I would love to dispense with a car entirely, but the Alpe d'Huez stage would be difficult; it's 50k from Grenoble to the base of Alpe d'Huez, and then another 13k UP! Which actually doesn't sound that bad...