

## Oof. Easy ride, hard ride, regular ride.

Interesting last few days as Kevin and I get ready to head to France. Originally, we were going to do big ride on Sunday, followed by an exploratory ride Monday where we'd be looking for commute routes from Foster City to Redwood City (because Kevin's moving to Foster City). But the weather wasn't cooperating Sunday; the coast was almost cold and definitely damp.

So Sunday we did a dual-purpose ride. Not just mapping out the convoluted route between Foster City and Redwood City (and yeah, it's really kind of nuts!), but also a shakedown cruise of the Bike Fridays, making sure they were ready for France. Not much needed aside from having to replace the front wheel on mine, a victim of the insane thunderstorm we descended through in 2020 (literally wore away enough of the rim's side that it was beginning to distort). These bikes are now 12 years old; who knew? Their first trip to France was in 2010! Hard to believe. They've held up pretty well despite a whole lot of folding & reassembly. Over those years they've saved is about \$3000 in extra bike fees each, although United recently changed their policies and now allow bikes as a standard piece of luggage.

Monday. Time to do reverse-Pescadero with the West Alpine "kicker." Neither of us really felt in shape for it, but with France coming up in a week, not much choice! Felt kinda sorta ok going up Old LaHonda, and kinda sorta ok heading out to the coast. With a mild tailwind the Stage Road section to Pescadero was a bit nicer than the normal direction, and I was finally beginning to feel a bit lively, able to put Kevin on the ropes on the first climb. Something I don't get to do very often anymore! Standard lunch in Pescadero (splitting a sandwich, cookie for Kevin, pastry for me) before heading out over Haskins the hard way, and then a real tough grind up West Alpine. Kevin was not feeling it, not at all. Thankfully it was at least warm, which is something we need to get used to; it's going to be VERY warm in France. Beautiful views up on Skyline!

We returned home pretty tired, wondering how we were going to survive the regular Tuesday/Thursday-morning ride, just 15 hours away. Especially when my Garmin said I was supposed to take it easy for... 87 hours!!!!???

This morning we woke up to really gray skies, although pretty warm. Kind of like... France. Karen showed up, so it wasn't going to be as easy as it would have been otherwise. Surprisingly, it didn't go too badly. I was expecting 35 minutes, maybe worse, and it was "only" 31:30 or so. But really, really wet up top. Bike's a mess! But we really felt better than we thought we would. One thing I did notice later- I was a lot hungrier than normal.

One more good ride to go, then we get onto a plane Sunday flying from San Francisco to Munich, which we hope is on time because there's only 50 minutes between landing and the flight to Lyon. Then we take a train straight from the airport (Europe's really good that way, having train stations built into airports) to Grenoble, where a 300ft walk puts us right at our favorite apartment. More to come!