

Leisure Cycling & Mountain Biking

Guidelines for Registration with Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

1. Definitions:

Leisure Cycling and Mountain Biking are two different forms of cycling.

Leisure Cycling and Mountain Biking can also be considered as Adventure Tourism Activities. The sport or activity of riding a bicycle. Cycle activities has three main forms: road racing (typically over long distances), pursuit (on an oval track), and Cyclo- Cross (over rough, open country).

1.1. Leisure Cycling: Leisure Cycling refers to the act of riding a bicycle on public roads, bike paths, or other paved surfaces. It can be used for transportation, exercise, or recreation. Road cycling typically involves riding a lightweight bike with thin tires on paved roads.

1.2. Mountain Biking: Mountain biking involves riding a bicycle off-road on trails, dirt roads, or other unpaved surfaces. It often involves steep climbs, technical terrain, and descents that require skill and control. Mountain bikes are designed to handle these challenges, with features such as wider tires, suspension systems, and stronger frames.

While Leisure Cycling and Mountain Biking both involve riding a bicycle, they differ in terms of terrain, equipment, and skill requirements. Both can be enjoyable forms of exercise and recreation, and can provide opportunities to explore the outdoor attractions connected with nature & culture.

1.3. Leisure Cycling & Mountain Biking Operator: Leisure Cycling & Mountain Biking Operator shall be a registered sole proprietor/ partnership or company who specialized in designing, planning, coordinating and organizing above leisure cycling & Mountain Biking activities for enthusiasts and adventure seekers. These organizers typically offer a range of services to ensure a well-organized and enjoyable experience for participants.

2. General Guidelines

2.1. Cycling terrain & paths

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- 2.1.1. Existing roads, cycling paths, or other paved surfaces shall be utilized for leisure cycling activities & any other demarcated off-roads on trails, dirt roads, unpaved & paved surfaces shall be utilized for mountain biking activities.

2.2. Trail Selection

- 2.2.1. Leisure Cycling or Mountain Biking trails shall be ear-marked and selected based on the participants' preference, skill level and the overall experiences.

2.3. Itinerary Planning

- 2.3.1. *Detailed itinerary that includes the route, trail difficulty levels, size of the group, duration of rides, and points of interest shall be developed according to the selected trail.
- 2.3.2. *Customized tour Itinerary shall be based on the preferences and skill levels of the participants.

2.4. Land Use and Permits

- 2.4.1. *Obtain necessary permits or permissions required for accessing specific trails or protected areas and take permission for utilizing public roads where necessary.
- 2.4.2. *In case of bicycle tours involve visiting protected areas, national parks, or heritage & archaeological sites, you may need permits or approvals from the relevant authorities.

2.5. Logistics and Equipment

- 2.5.1. *Back-up vehicle, mechanics, bike repair kit, spare bikes and accessories, navigation tools, first aid kit, board and lodging, meals & refreshments shall be provided by the operator.

2.6. Equipment and Maintenance

- 2.6.1. *Maintain a fleet of well-maintained bicycles appropriate for different terrain and participant needs.
- 2.6.2. *Regularly inspect and service bikes to ensure they are safe and in good working condition.
- 2.6.3. *Have spare parts and tools readily available for quick repairs during tours.
- 2.6.4. *Educate participants about basic bike maintenance and provide guidance if they encounter minor issues during the tour.
- 2.6.5. *Ensure bicycles and equipment comply with safety standards and regulations. Regularly inspect and maintain them to ensure they are safe for use.

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2.6.6. *Provide safety equipment such as helmets, reflective gear, and lights to participants and enforce their usage during tours.

2.7. Guides and Support Staff

2.7.1. *The experienced cycling guides (master cyclist / navigator, middleman and rear cyclist) shall be well versed with the trails, localities, gear and equipment, safety protocols, and emergency procedures. Support staff may include mechanics, first aid responders, and drivers.

2.8. *Safety Measures:

2.8.1. Service provider shall obtain clients' (participants) details and sign medical and indemnity form.

2.8.2. The participants shall educate about road rules, traffic regulations, and safe cycling practices.

2.8.3. Implementing safety measures and guidelines to ensure the well-being of participants during the tour.

2.8.4. This may include briefings on trail etiquette, emergency procedures, first aid and communication facilities (mobile communication, radio communication etc.) along the planned cycling tours. In addition to that necessary traffic police assistance may be obtained according to the nature of the tour.

2.8.5. Weather conditions shall be checked before heading out on a cycling or mountain biking adventure. The operator shall have the awareness of general weather condition patterns of the relevant area/locations.

2.8.6. Aware of adventure cycling and mountain biking can be thrilling and rewarding experiences, but they require preparation and caution to ensure your safety and enjoyment.

2.8.7. **Wear appropriate gear:** always wear a helmet and appropriate clothing and shoes for cycling or mountain biking. This can include gloves, padded shorts, and closed-toe shoes.

2.8.8. **Check your bike:** Before heading out, make sure your bike is in good working condition. Check the brakes, tires, and gears to ensure they are functioning properly.

2.8.9. The bike shall be provided according to the individual specifications of the participants.

2.8.10. **Know your route:** before starting your ride, familiarize yourself with the route and any potential hazards or obstacles. This can help you avoid accidents and ensure a safe and enjoyable ride.

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- 2.8.11. **Start slow:** if you're new to cycling or mountain biking, start with shorter, easier routes and gradually build up to more challenging terrain.
- 2.8.12. **Use proper technique:** when cycling or mountain biking, use proper technique to reduce the risk of injury. This includes keeping your elbows slightly bent, shifting your weight as needed, and using your legs to absorb shock.
- 2.8.13. **Stay hydrated:** bring adequate amount of drinking water and stay hydrated during your ride. This is especially important on longer rides or when cycling or mountain biking in hot weather.
- 2.8.14. **Follow the rules:** always follow traffic laws and regulations, including stopping at stop signs and traffic lights. When mountain biking, stay on designated trails and respect any posted rules or regulations.
- 2.8.15. **Ride with a buddy:** operator shall always encourage the cyclists to ride with a friend or joining a cycling or mountain biking groups for the safety benefits of the participants.
- 2.8.16. **Risk Management:** A comprehensive plan shall be available to identify, mitigate & respond to potential risks.
- 2.8.17. *All emergency contact numbers (such as hospital, doctors on call, police station, fire brigade rescue unit, armed forces, and relevant local authorities) of parties to be contacted in case of an emergency shall be always available with the master cyclist/ navigator & other crew members as well as at the communication base station.
- 2.8.18. *Written code of conduct shall be available for the Operators and Passengers according to the SOP.

2.9. *Sustainable Practices:

- 2.9.1. The cycling operator shall offer a detailed sustainable policy, demonstrating commitment to environmental, social, and economic responsibility for participants awareness.
- 2.9.2. Promote sustainable tourism practices by minimizing your environmental impact.
- 2.9.3. Encourage participants to follow responsible behavior, such as respecting local customs, disposing of waste properly, and supporting local businesses.
- 2.9.4. Encourage eco-friendly vehicle support during tours and prioritize cycling as the primary mode of transportation.
- 2.9.5. Collaborate with local communities and organizations to support conservation efforts and contribute to the local economy and proper awareness of the local cultural clusters.

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- 2.9.6. Stay on designated trails, pack out all trash, and avoid disturbing wildlife according to the LNT principals shall be adhered when engaging the cycling activities.

2.10. Expertise and Training

- 2.10.1. *Staff shall possess in-depth knowledge about the areas where you operate tours, including local attractions, roads, and cycling routes, road rules, traffic regulations, and safe cycling practices.
- 2.10.2. *Operator & staff shall update with local laws and regulations regarding cycling and tourism.
- 2.10.3. *The staff shall train on hospitality, customer service, emergency response procedures, elementary & wilderness first aid, bike maintenance, LNT principals, riding techniques & ethics.

2.11. Staffing and Customer Service

- 2.11.1. Hire knowledgeable and experienced guides who are passionate about cycling and the areas you operate in.
- 2.11.2. Train guides to provide excellent customer service, including effective communication, conflict resolution, and ensuring participant satisfaction.
- 2.11.3. Foster a friendly and inclusive atmosphere that encourages participants to ask questions, interact with each other, and have an enjoyable experience.

2.12. Insurance and Legal Considerations

- 2.12.1. *The operator shall obtain public liability insurance coverage for the protection of tour participants, crew & third party.
- 2.12.2. *The operator shall comply with all necessary permits, licenses, and legal requirements for operating a tour business in your area.
- 2.12.3. *The operator shall clearly communicate terms and conditions, cancellation policies, and any potential risks to participants before they book the tour.

- 2.112. ***Participant Feedback:** Encourage participants to provide feedback on their experience, including safety concerns or suggestions for improvement. Use feedback to continually enhance safety and the overall participant experience.