Tour de France 2026

JULY 4-26

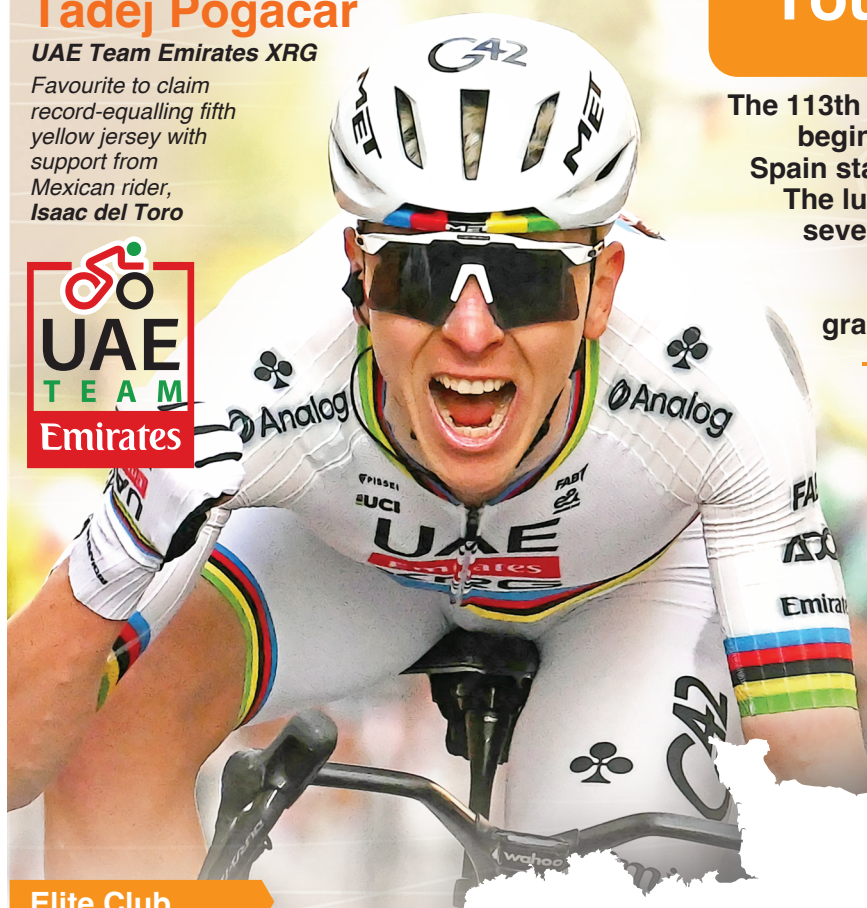
The 113th edition of cycling's most prestigious race begins in the vibrant city of Barcelona, as Spain stages the Grand Départ for the third time. The lung-bursting route features punishing several new climbs across five mountain ranges – gaining over 54,450m in elevation – peaking at the grandiose Col du Galibier on Stage 20

Defending champion
Tadej Pogačar
UAE Team Emirates XRG

Favourite to claim record-equalling fifth yellow jersey with support from Mexican rider, ***Isaac del Toro***

2026 Giro d'Italia champion
Jonas Vingegaard
Visma-Lease a Bike

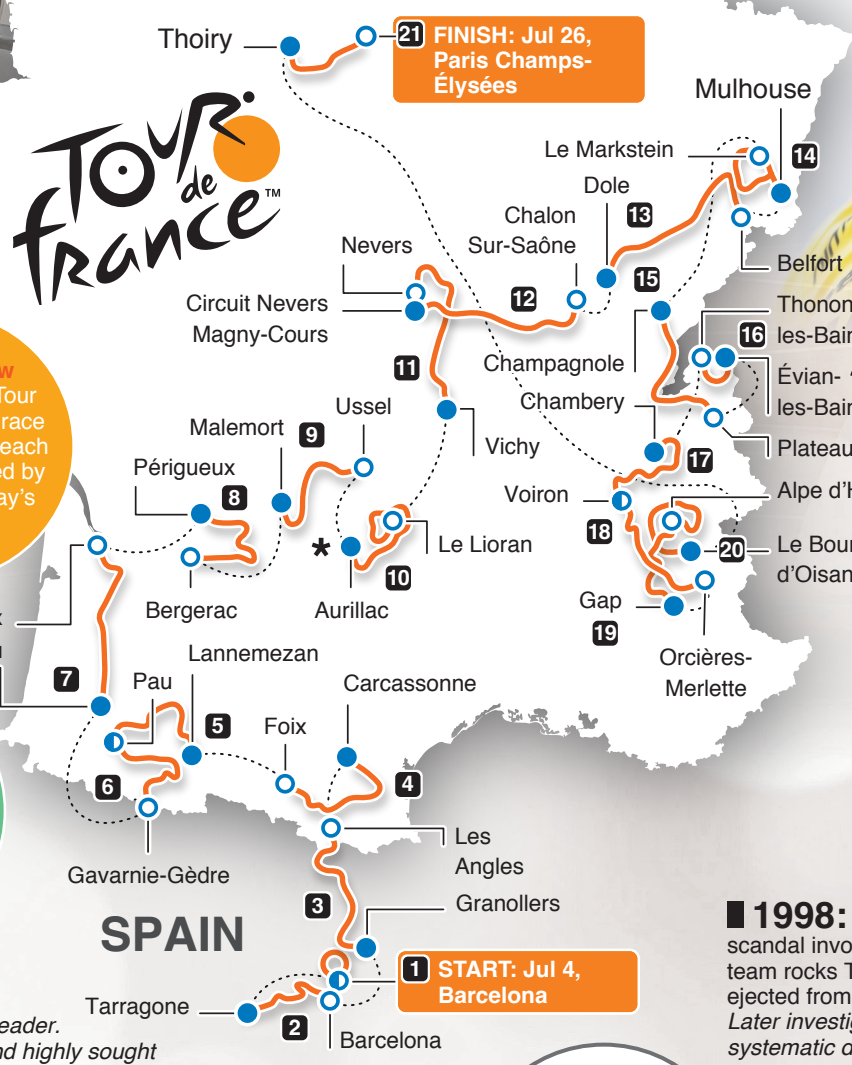
Only eighth rider to win all three of Grand Tours after superb Giro victory, winning by huge margin of five minutes and 22 seconds





ROUTE 2026

Total race distance: 3321.2km



Overall leader: Yellow
Awarded to Le Tour winner. Worn by race leader at start of each stage – calculated by totalling each day's finishing time

Points leader: Green
Fastest sprinters compete for points at end of each stage – points adjusted by terrain, flat stages awarding most points

King of the Mountains: Polka dot
Held by rider who proves to be best climber, with more severe climbs offering most points

Best young rider: White
Awarded to highest placed rider aged under 25. Prize returned in 2000 after 10-year hiatus

STAGE BREAKDOWN

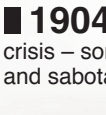
Stage 1
Start
Finish
Start / finish
Rest day
Individual time-trial
Team time-trial
Mountain stage
Hill stage
Flat

Stage	Date	km
1	Jul 4	19.6
2	5	168.5
3	6	195.9
4	7	181.9
5	8	158.3
6	9	186.2
7	10	175.1
8	11	180.4
9	12	185.5
10	14	166.6
11	15	161.3
12	16	179.1
13	17	205.8
14	18	155.3
15	19	183.9
16	21	26.1
17	22	174.7
18	23	185.2
19	24	127.9
20	25	170.9
21	26	133.0

Elite Club

Four riders have conquered Le Tour five times, with ***Bernard Hinault's*** *1985 win providing most recent French victory*


5 Jacques Anquetil *FRA*
1957, 61, 62, 63, 64


5 Eddy Merckx *BEL*
1969, 70, 71, 72, 74

5 Bernard Hinault *FRA*
1978, 79, 81, 82, 85

5 Miguel Induráin *ESP*
1991, 92, 93, 94, 95

4 Chris Froome *GBR*
2013, 15, 16, 17

4 Tadej Pogačar *SVN*
2020, 21, 24, 25

Eddy Merckx, *pictured in 2025, arguably most successful rider in history of competitive cycling with 11 Grand Tour titles*

Yellow jersey *first awarded in 1919 to help spectators identify race leader. Instantly recognisable and highly sought after, it has since been worn by riders from over 20 countries*

HIGHEST NUMBER OF DAYS IN YELLOW JERSEY

Eddy Merckx *(1969-72, 1974-75)* — Including half stages — **111**

Bernard Hinault *(1978-82, 1984-86)* — **79**

Miguel Induráin *(1991-95)* — **60**

Chris Froome *(2013, 2015-17)* — **59**

Le Tour: Start to finish

1903: ***Henri Desgrange*** *(right),* editor of ***L'Auto*** sports newspaper, creates ***Tour de France*** to boost sales. ***Maurice Garin*** of France is first winner

1904: Cheating crisis – some riders take trains and sabotage rivals' bicycles

1905 Inaugural mountain climb, on Ballon d'Alsace

1919 Desgrange introduces yellow jersey *(L'Auto is printed on yellow paper)*

1930 Manufacturers' teams replaced by national squads

1937: Derailleur systems permit gear changes without removing wheels

1952 ***Fausto Coppi*** wins by postwar record of 28 mins, 27 secs

1967: Drug tests introduced after British cyclist ***Tom Simpson*** dies on Mont Ventoux

1969: In stunning debut, Belgian ***Eddy Merckx*** wins all three main jerseys – only rider ever to do so

1986 American ***Greg LeMond*** becomes first non-European winner

1989: LeMond defeats ***Laurent Fignon*** by eight seconds, smallest margin of victory in Tour history

1991-95 Spaniard ***Miguel Induráin*** becomes first man to win five consecutive Tours

1998: Major doping scandal involving ***Festina*** team rocks Tour – team ejected from race. *Later investigations reveal systematic doping within sport*

1999-2005: ***Lance Armstrong*** *(above)* wins seven Tours in a row but is stripped of his titles in 2012 after lengthy doping investigation

2012-18 ***Bradley Wiggins*** *(inset)* becomes first British winner. Compatriots ***Chris Froome*** (4) and ***Geraint Thomas*** (1) win five of next six Tours for Team Sky

2019: ***Egan Bernal,*** 22, is first Colombian to win Tour de France

2024: Race finishes outside French capital for first time, due to Paris ***Olympic*** and ***Paralympic Games***

In 2024, prolific rider ***Mark Cavendish*** *(GBR, left), racing for* ***Astana Qazaqstan Team,*** *broke stage wins record – surpassing Merckx – with superb sprint finish to claim his 35th victory in Saint Vulbas*

Coupe Omnisports
Designed in 1971

Source: Le Tour, Encyclopedia of the Yellow Jersey

Pictures: AP, Getty Images, Nationaal Archief, National Library of France

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