LOCAL NEWS

See the world from a bike without leaving this Rancho Cucamonga studio

By STAN LIM | slim@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise PUBLISHED: March 16, 2018 at 1:57 pm | UPDATED: March 16, 2018 at 1:58 pm



Dressed in her spandex and cycling shoes, Tamara Friday is ready to ride through the streets of London. The Upland woman straddles her bike, joining her friend Connie Teegarden, of Apple Valley, and the two begin to ride. Passing iconic locations like Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and the London Tower, the ladies build up a good sweat over the 17-mile route – without ever leaving the Inland Empire.

The pair stayed indoors for this adventure, cycling side by side, taking in the sights of a faraway place without having to worry about motorists, stopping at intersections, or watching out for pedestrians.

At VROOM Cycling, a virtual cycling studio in Rancho Cucamonga, clients such as Friday and Teegarden take guided rides on simulated courses created by companies such as Zwift or Road Grand Tours. Clients may choose to use a spin bike, a road bike supplied by the studio, or they may bring their own bike. Courses range from group rides to races to structured workouts.

"This actually gives you the opportunity to get that same level of fitness but also do it in a way that is immersive and feels more like being on the road," Rick Reddell, co-owner of VROOM, explained. "This is really like bringing the road indoors but without the perils of the road."

Riders watch large monitors in front of them as they ride a virtual course from real locations in England, France, Spain and more. The programs connect riders to others around the world; it is not uncommon to have 2,000 to 4,000 riders on the same course at once.

Even though the makers of the software create sceneries as realistic and accurate as they can, this is virtual reality.

"Once you break the bounds of reality, you can start to do some interesting things," Reddell said.

"There's a glass tube that goes underwater," he added. "We can ride through a volcano, we can ride over snow-cove-red peaks, we can go through ancient ruins, and that's all on the same course, so you can do all that in the span of an hour."

Rick said he and his wife, Sonya, opened the studio to create a safe environment for riders. A virtual studio gives riders a way to train, even when the weather is bad, and helps them ride farther in miles and reach their goals faster in a shorter amount of time.

Friday and Teegarden have been using the studio to train for an upcoming bike tour that will have them climbing 23,000 feet in four days.

"We need something that we can be consistent at that will build strength, which this will do," Friday said. "On the road you notice you use power then you don't, this you use power the whole time."

Vroom

What: Clients' first rides are free at this virtual cycling studio.

Where: 9581 Business Center Drive, Suite 12-E, Rancho Cucamonga

Hours: 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays by appointment; 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays

walk-ins welcome; 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekends by appointment only

Information: 909-493-5812; vroomcycling.com

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Stan Lim is a photographer/videographer for the Southern California News Group.

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