

**The How and the Why of Self  
Supported Bicycle Touring**  
**Susan Blessing + Kevin Sossong**



## How Other People Do It – Without Much



## How Other People Do It – With Lots of Stuff



## How Other People Do It – Neat and Tidy



## How Other People Do It – With Kids



## How Other People Do It – On a Recumbent



## How Other People Do It – On Tandems



How We Did (Do) It



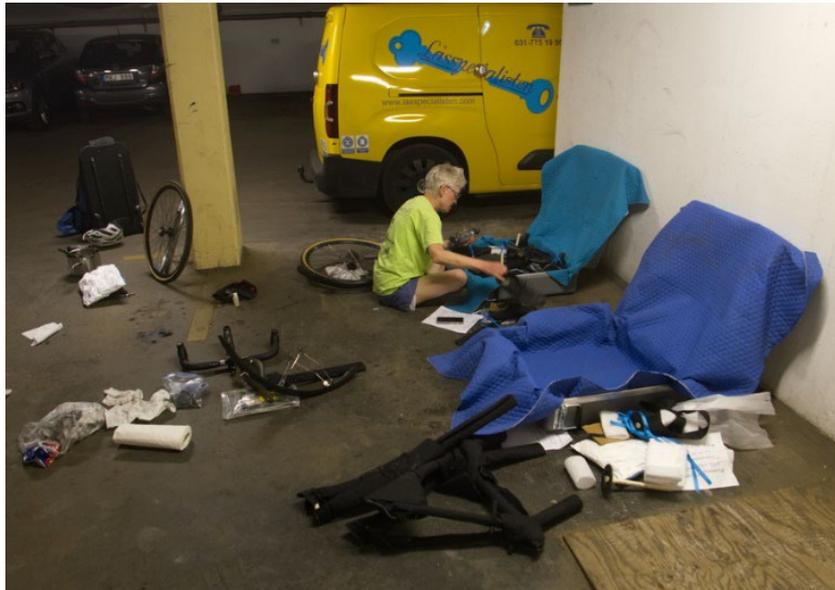
# Travel With All That Equipment



## Putting the Bike(s) Together



## Putting the Bike(s) Together



# Travels Through Time



# Travel Through Time



## Travels Through Time – Still Going



# Less Than Ideal Conditions



# Meet New Friends



# Commune With Nature



# Meet The Challenge



# We Love Old-School Paper Maps



## Pick a Nice Tent Site





## Pick a Nice Tent Site



# Tent Life



## Neat & organized packing



# Daily Laundry - Kevin's Domain



# When There is Too Much Rain



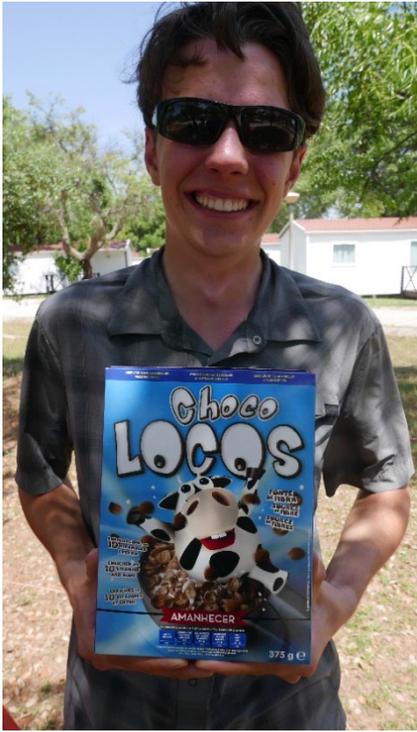
# Sample the Local Food and Drink



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## Learn a New Skill



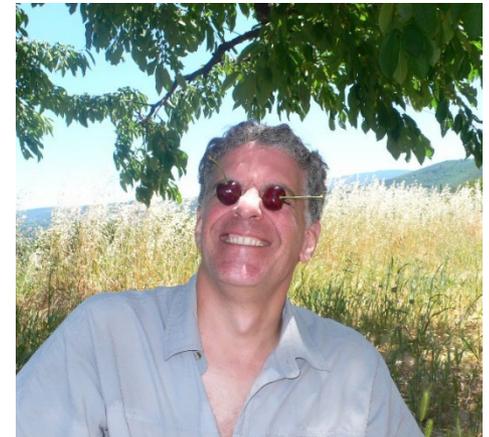
# See Some Cool Stuff



## Relax at the Campground



## Choose Good Travel Companions



# Choose Good Travel Companions



Some nice photos



Some nice photos



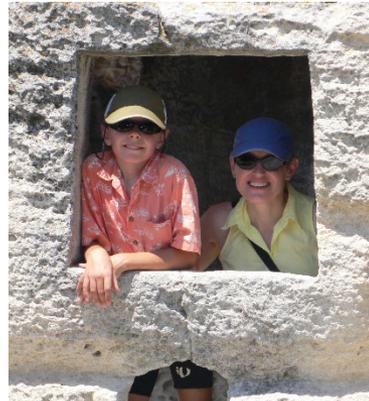
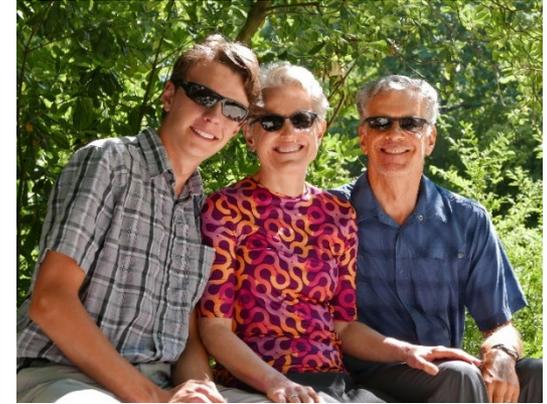
Some nice photos



# Take Keepsake Photos



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## Take Keepsake Photos



## The Real Reason for a Bike Tour



## Things to Consider

### PLANNING

Find an area to visit – warmer or cooler weather, how hilly, how rainy.

Pick a starting city – city/tourist opportunities, museums, gardens, zoos.

Order Lonely Planet guide book and paper maps (1:150,000 scale from Stanfords.co.uk).

Google Maps – grocery stores and points of interest, Mapy.cz shows bike and hiking trails

Using a phone with online maps is invaluable for navigating through towns.

Go online to connect points of interest and locate campgrounds to help rough-plan a circular route.

3 weeks of vacation = 2.5 weeks of riding = about 600-800 miles of riding.

Pick a hotel or Airbnb for start & end dates that can store the luggage while we are riding.

Find a house sitter who will also take care of Cooper.

### EQUIPMENT

Front panniers + a trailer + a waterproof map case for Susan.

3 shirts + 3 shorts + 3 socks + thin wool shirt + thin wool sweater + shorts/skirt + tights + wind vest + rain jacket.

We use quick-drying stretch shirts, never cycling jerseys – we never use rain pants.

Small quick-drying towel and minimal toiletries + bar soap in sealing containers – repack liquids into small bottles.

Ebooks + baseball caps + swim suits + prescription swim goggles.

We made a 16' long clothes line of para-cord + spring clips trimmed down to save space – We do laundry daily.

Our tent is not the lightest – we are OK carrying an extra pound or two of tent for comfort.

We use a camping quilt over thin air mattresses covered by slip-on cotton cases that can be washed.

A bike cover for over night + light lock and long cable + some tools + spare cables + several spare tubes.

Everything goes into stuff sacks of a variety of colors – roll-top handles are our favorite.

We will always carry some emergency canned/pouch food and granola bars.

We sometimes carry a stove & pot, but always carry bowls and sporks and a small folding knife.

## Our Tour History

### **BD – Before Dominick**

**1986 – New Zealand – Auckland to Christchurch – 4 weeks**

**1988 – Australia – Sydney to Hobart Tasmania – 4 weeks**

**1990 – New Hampshire White Mountains - 2 weeks**

**1991 - New Zealand – Auckland to Christchurch – 4 weeks**

**1993 – Kentucky for 2 weeks**

**1995 – Vermont Green Mountains – 2 weeks**

### **AD – After Dominick**

**2001 – Oregon - along the Columbia River – 3 weeks**

**2002 – Washington & BC - the San Juan Islands – 3 weeks**

**2003 – France - Burgundy starting in Beaune – 3 weeks**

**2004 – Austria – Starting in Vienna, riding the Danube – 3 weeks**

**2005 – France – Brittany starting Nantes – 3 weeks**

**2006 – France – Dordogne starting in Les Eyzies – 3 weeks**

**2007 – France – Alsace starting in Strasburg – 3 weeks**

**2008 – France – Provence starting in Aix-en-Provence – 3 weeks**

**2009 – Switzerland – starting in Zurich – 3 weeks**

**2010 – France – Garonne starting in Toulouse – 3 weeks**

**2012 – France – Charente starting in Bordeaux – 3 weeks**

**2013 – Denmark starting in Copenhagen – 3 weeks**

**2015 – Hungary starting in Budapest – 3 weeks**

**2016 – Croatia starting in Triest, Italy – 3 weeks**

**2017 – Portugal starting in Lisbon – 3 weeks**

**2018 – Sweden starting in Stockholm – 3 weeks**

**2020 – USA - North Georgia per Covid – 2 weeks**

**2021 – USA – Michigan starting near Grand Rapids – 3 weeks**

**2022 – France – Provence starting in Marseille – 2 weeks**

**2023 – Sweden starting in Gothenburg – 3 weeks**