

**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



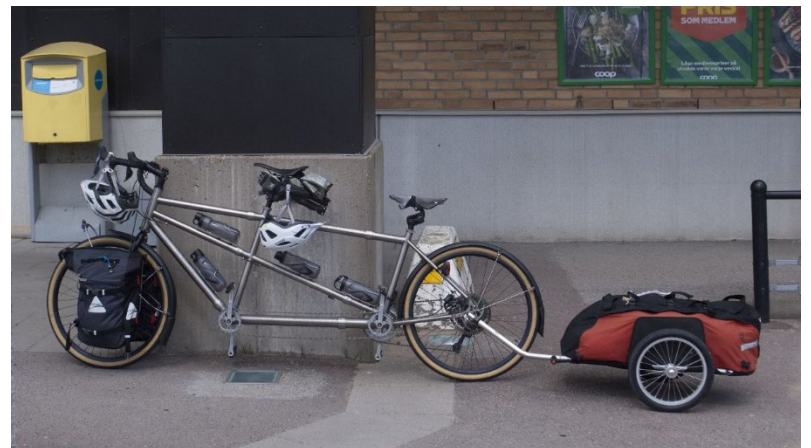
How Other People Do It – On a Recumbent



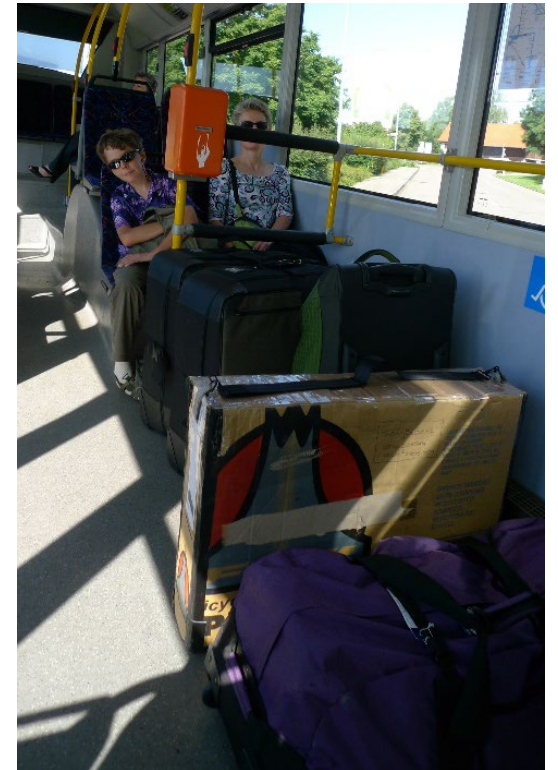
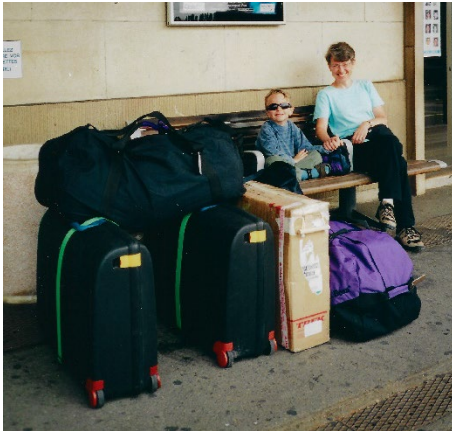
How Other People Do It – On Tandems



How We Did (Do) It



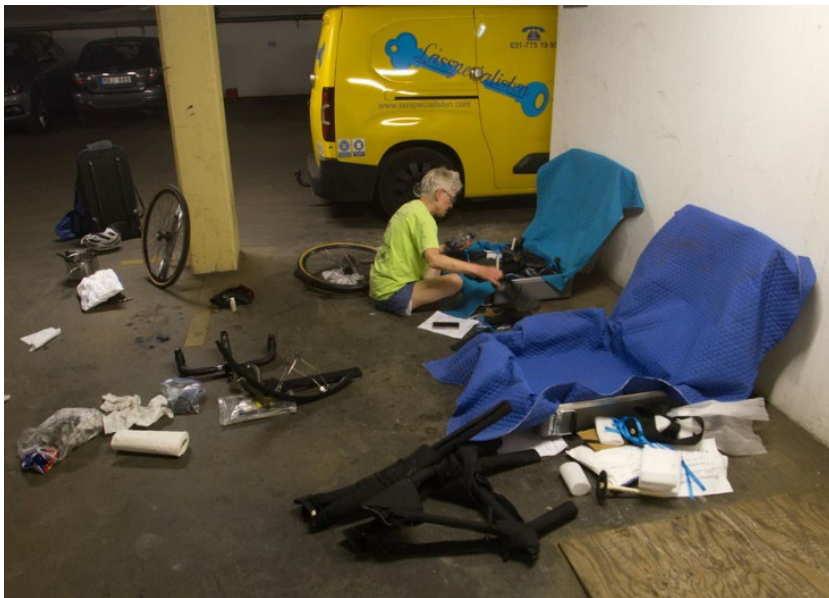
Travel With All That Equipment



Putting the Bike(s) Together



Putting the Bike(s) Together



Travels Through Time



Travel Through Time



Travels Through Time – Still Going

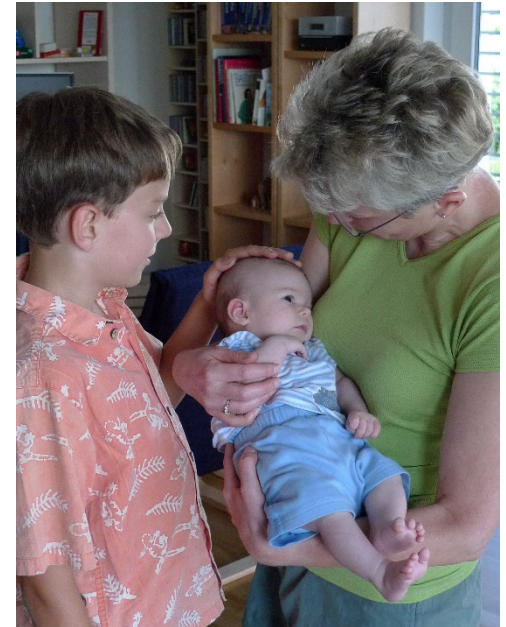




Less Than Ideal Conditions



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



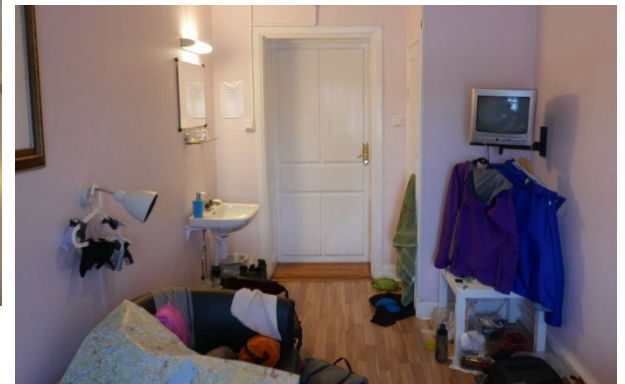
Neat & organized packing



Daily Laundry - Kevin's Domain



When There is Too Much Rain



Sample the Local Food and Drink



Sample the Local Food and Drink



Sample the Local Food and Drink



Learn a New Skill



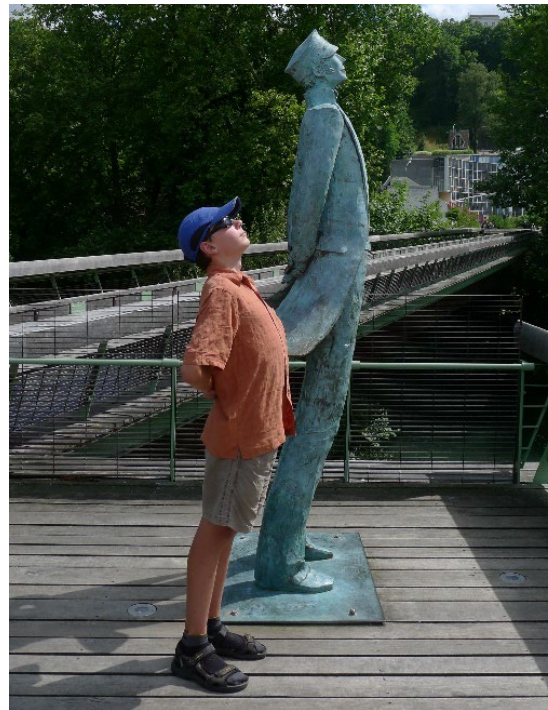
See Some Cool Stuff



Relax at the Campground



Choose Good Travel Companions



Choose Good Travel Companions



Some nice photos



Some nice photos



Some nice photos



Take Keepsake Photos



Take Keepsake Photos



Take Keepsake Photos



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 Strasbourg – 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