

No. **4330**

Bagels, Books, and Bikes



PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG SIPLE STORY BY GAGE POORE

→ IMAGINE WAKING after a night of conversation with newly acquainted houseguests to the smell of bagels wafting from your own oven. That's precisely the experience rewarded to those generous enough to open their homes to Adam Grosshans and Crystal Bae along their cross-country cycling journey. During their stay in Missoula, the couple stayed with Adventure Cycling staff member Rachel Stevens and her partner Evan, so it can be said unequivocally that the bagels were delicious as well as aromatic. "It's great to have breakfast with our new-found friends before we move along to our next destination," wrote Adam. Over the course of their 4,600-mile bike journey from Washington, DC, to Santa Barbara, California, they had the opportunity to do so on multiple occasions.

Although there are many reasons for bicycle travel, Crystal and Adam were one of the rare cases we see of self-powered relocation. As lifelong East Coast residents, Crystal's acceptance into the Urban Geography master's program at UC Santa Barbara spurred the couples' dream to move via bicycle. After shipping their possessions, they only needed to get themselves to California, and why not by bicycle? During the three-month tour, they camped near chickens whose eggs became breakfast and floated the Clark Fork River on inner tubes in Montana. "We learned what it feels like to have an enormous appetite every day and to have earned it," Crystal wrote. They were given two books from hosts along the way — *Cycling Home* by Rob Lilwall and *A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean. "These we read out loud to each other in our tents at night."

Both were glad they moved by bike, but according to Adam, "It wasn't all smooth sailing. We had our physical, mental and mechanical breakdowns and a few rough days that made us want to throw in the towel, but luckily our bad days never overlapped — leaving one of us cheery, dragging the other westward." Settling into their new home in Santa Barbara, cycling remains a large part of each of their lives. Crystal concludes, "Southern California is splendid for cycling, though strangely, I miss the rush of cycling through DC. The weather here is almost too nice."

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