Jim Musante

How best to recover from the Boston Marathon? Head out on a cross-country ride.

In September, Jim Musante will run his 40th consecutive Boston Marathon. To commemorate the race, he will then ride his bike down the Atlantic Coast. The post-marathon bike trip is a tradition he started when he rode the Southern Tier after his 25th Boston finish. Now, after every five races, he caps the marathon off with an epic ride.

“Long-distance cycling and marathoning overlap in all aspects,” Musante explained. “Mainly patience, just keep going forward and you will get it done. Don’t stop. It seems like every bike tour — substitute marathon — the feelings of satisfaction and joy get better and better.”

After college and short on funds, Musante decided to run or ride everywhere within 20 miles. He has kept the habit for nearly 40 years, gaining a reputation in his hometown of New Smyrna Beach, Florida, as that guy who is always running or cycling.

If you get an inkling that Jim Musante might not be like the rest of us, you’d be correct. When asked how he balanced family life, running a restaurant, and training for marathons, Musante said, “I’ve always been blessed with not having to sleep much. I would finish at the restaurant about 1:00 AM and then go on a 10-mile run. I’d sleep four or five hours and then get the kids up for school. I lived off adrenaline for years. I’ve slowed down a little bit, but I’ve always been a high-energy guy.”

Musante read about Bikecentennial ’76, and he knew he eventually wanted to do a long ride. When he hatched his plan to ride across the country, he knew where to find the maps. “For all my trips, I’ve used Adventure Cycling maps, which are the best maps on earth,” he said. “I always feel like I have my back covered. I’ve called Adventure Cycling to ask questions when I was in the middle of nowhere.”

On his first cross-country trip, Musante described the first 10 solo days as brutal. Then, at a casino in the Mojave Desert, he bumped into two fellow Southern Tier riders — college grads from Washington — with the same goal of 100-mile days. They rode the rest of the route together.

“I doubt I could have finished without them. I met their parents, who said they wouldn’t have made it without meeting me! Within a year, I flew out to surprise one of them on his wedding day. Those are lifelong friendships.”

For Musante, bicycle travel is about the people. While riding Bicycle Route 66 (post–Boston Marathon 35), he met a cyclist riding a figure eight of the country. In Oklahoma, he traveled with two Nazarenes for 10
days, trading his end-of-the-day beers for milkshakes.

Musante supports the U.S. Bicycle Route System because he hopes it will help inspire others to venture out and be transformed by bike travel. “Riding a bike is a simple form of transportation. It can be relatively inexpensive, and you will taste, smell, and feel your adventure. The people I’ve met along the way are some of my happiest memories, and I wish everyone could feel that same feeling.”

April Cypher is Adventure Cycling’s Development Manager.

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Your support will create the largest bicycle route network in the world: the U.S. Bicycle Route System. Currently over half the states in the U.S. have at least one route, but we need your help to keep the momentum going and get a route every state! Unlike public route systems in Canada and Europe, the U.S. Bicycle Route System is funded almost completely by individuals like you.

We’re committed to raising $250,000 this May for a connected U.S. Bicycle Route System. If you like the idea of more places to ride and federally recognized bicycle routes, please consider making a donation today at adventurecycling.org/support-USBRS.

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