Barry Kaiser

Nowhere he won’t go, nothing he won’t eat

The Guianas in South America — Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana — are not a well-known travel destination. And that is exactly why Barry Kaiser was planning a bicycle trip there this fall.

“I knew nothing about those three countries. I didn’t know anyone who had been there. But as I started to research, they became more interesting. I’m always looking for something different,” said Kaiser, an investment manager living in Edmonton, Alberta.

He describes himself as an “investment professional who cycles the world for its culture, insight, and food.” His penchant for any street food anywhere has gained him the moniker Barry “the Seagull” Kaiser.

Kaiser came to bike travel by way of competitive waterskiing. “All competitive water-skiers congregate in southern Florida in the winter,” Kaiser said. To stay in shape, he started cycling. A few years later, in 1989, he decided to ride around the world.

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At the Gaza Strip, soldiers told him it was too dangerous to enter and redirected him. When he finally reached the Israel-Egypt boarder, the Israeli immigration officer told him that it had been six months since a cyclist had crossed the Sinai Desert.

“Apprehensive, I made my way to the other side where an armed Egyptian soldier met me,” said Kaiser. “Not sure what to expect, I braced myself for his response. He broke a big Egyptian smile to say, ‘Welcome to Egypt!’ I nearly fell off my bike. The remainder of my trip to Cairo was just as warm and inviting as that encounter. I learned that day that no border was too difficult to cross and no obstacle was too big to overcome.”

On his first bicycle tour, Kaiser traveled over 22,000 kilometers through four continents and 22 countries. Instead of satiating his desire to travel, the trip only stoked it. After 30 years of exploring the world by bike, there is hardly anywhere he won’t go. He admits that Southeast Asia can’t be equaled for its food, culture, and hospitality — he’s done five tours there.

The verdict on the Guianas’s street food is still out since COVID-19 has pushed the trip back until next year.

Kaiser will keep packing his bicycle because “it allows me to absorb a
country, its people, and its culture. There is no other means of travel that allows one to do it quite that way. It has defined the person I am today. Cycle touring is the thing I am most proud of with my life.”

After his world tour, Kaiser joined Adventure Cycling. He recently became part of the Legacy Society and included Adventure Cycling in his will. “I see a real opportunity for people who have more than they need for retirement to give back to society and leave some kind of legacy,” Kaiser said. “We all have things we would like to see changed in this world. Cycle touring has given me so much over the past 30 years, and I want to pay that back partially through this planned giving program. I can’t find a better organization to do that with than Adventure Cycling.”

April Cypher is Adventure Cycling’s Assistant Development Director. In reading Barry’s blog (travelblog.org/Bloggers/Panchoy), she learned that escamoles is Spanish for ant larvae on your appetizer.

Adventure Cycling’s Legacy Society is a group of bike travel enthusiasts who have committed to ensuring a rich and lasting future for bike travel.

If you would like to become a part of the legacy of inspiring and empowering people to travel by bicycle, consider making Adventure Cycling a beneficiary in your will or estate plans. Your gift will help build a permanent source of support that will keep Adventure Cycling’s mission alive and strong into the future.

If you have already included Adventure Cycling in your will or other estate plans, please let us know so that we can thank you. If you would like more information, please contact April Cypher, at acypher@adventurecycling.org or call at 406.532.2775.