



ROUTE	NAMES	NO.
Calgary Airport to Salt Lake City via the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route	Berkeley Loper, Grace Cole, Bjorn Nicolaisen, Ave Richer (not pictured)	5384
		DATE
		09/03/2022
UNUSUAL OBJECTS	WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA	
Spider plant (died before U.S. border)	@hotgirlsinhelmets	
	AGES	
		23, 22, 23, 21 (respectively)

NATIONAL BICYCLE TOURING PORTRAIT COLLECTION

Bikesnacking

► Following the Great Resignation, in which three of four self-described misfits quit their jobs, the group flew from their homes in Washington, Utah, and Colorado to Canada to begin their journey with little planning apart from a brief read through of a bikepacking webpage. “It took Ave, Berk, Bjorn, and Grace five days to escape Calgary and make it to the start of the Great Divide [Mountain Bike Route] in Banff due to heat waves, grocery store breakdowns, and inefficient planning sessions, but at long last their wheels left the pavement, and they began pedaling down the trail.”

“Crossing back into the U.S. a week later was not without emotional anguish,” wrote Berkeley Loper weeks later, having arrived at Adventure Cycling headquarters on September 3, 2022. “All of the riders, but Grace and Berkeley in particular, had become obsessed with Canadian candy and cookies, and ended up spending embarrassingly large quantities of cash on sugar at the last gas station in Canada.” Berkeley wrote, “Bjorn, the Ultralight King, said no to unnecessary candy bars, but could be seen munching Digestives (the most delicious cookies) throughout his days on the saddle. Everyone was worried for what might happen on the day he ran out of cookies and couldn’t buy more. Ave wasn’t as dependent on Digestives as the other three, but let their intuition guide them through the snack sections of every grocery store and would return to their bike with armfuls of goodies.” As the trip progressed, Berkeley wrote, “*Town Days* have become the downfall of the four travelers. Grocery store stops are wildly inefficient and usually involve someone walking out to sit by themselves on the

words by **GAGE POORE**
photograph by **ALLY MABRY**

curb, unable to interact, armfuls of unnecessary treats, and aimless wandering through the aisles. Planning sessions become stressful quickly and the group relocates between coffee shops and public libraries until hunger sets in and all hope of planning devolves.”

A rider from the UK who rode with the group for a week admitted writing in his journal, “the girls have a lack of awareness for those around them,” and was always commenting on the absurd amount of sugar they consumed. Another journal entry observed that, “the girls ran out of sugar and broke down on the side of the road. They ended up taking the highway to avoid the hill.” Despite sugar-induced breakdowns, the group continued with gusto, “ticking off kilometers (they go by much faster than miles) with speed and still managing to skinny dip every day in rivers and lakes.” On the days when highways couldn’t be avoided, “the four cope with cars and pavement by riding topless (except Bjorn), donning their sparkly skirts (for safety) and listening to music.” A few miles down the road after the group’s stay in Missoula, Montana, smoke from the 2022 fire season persuaded them to rent a car and head west to Berkeley’s mom’s house in Seattle, where they continued their trip north. “We concluded our journey back in Vancouver where Ave’s car was parked at a friend’s house. With one last stop at the grocery store to purchase 20 more rolls of Canadian cookies and at Tim Hortons for the final Icccaps of the trip, we were on our way back to Bellingham. We spent the hours stuck at the border crossing swing dancing and cartwheeling through the grass as the sun set on the Pacific Ocean on our last night together.” 🚩