

My Epic Cycling Adventure: Conquering a Biking Big Year in the Era of Covid-19

It goes without saying that the year 2020 was a roller coaster of emotions, challenges, and unexpected twists due to the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic. As an avid cyclist, my initial disappointment of canceled events and restricted travel plans soon transformed into a determination to turn the situation around and embark on an extraordinary journey. Thus began my biking big year, a thrilling and unforgettable experience that provided solace, freedom, and a breath of fresh air amidst the chaos of the pandemic.

Discovering the Concept of a Biking Big Year

The concept of a big year generally refers to birdwatching enthusiasts attempting to spot as many bird species as possible within a calendar year. Inspired by this idea, I decided to tailor it to my passion for cycling, aiming to explore diverse terrains and conquer epic challenges on two wheels.

With Covid-19 limitations in place, undertaking a biking big year seemed to be the perfect way to adapt and make the most of the situation. I knew it would allow me to create my own adventure while respecting social distancing guidelines and embracing the great outdoors.

Extreme Birding: My Biking Big Year in the Era of COVID-19 by S. M. Amadae (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled



Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 294 pages
Lending : Enabled



Setting Goals and Planning the Journey

One of the most crucial elements in embarking on a biking big year was setting clear goals and planning my journey meticulously. I began by defining a set of objectives that consisted of both quantity and quality targets.

Quantity goals encompassed covering a specific distance, such as biking at least 10,000 miles within the year, which equated to approximately 28 miles per day. To achieve this, I needed to strategize my daily routes, select weekends and vacation periods for longer trips, and ensure consistency in my biking routine.

On the other hand, quality goals centered around experiencing unique biking locations, conquering challenging terrains, and discovering hidden gems. I researched diverse trails, road cycling routes, and mountain biking destinations that promised awe-inspiring landscapes and thrilling adventures.

Adapting to Covid-19 Guidelines

As responsible bikers, it was crucial to keep up with the latest Covid-19 guidelines and adapt accordingly. Safety was my top priority throughout the biking big year.

I ensured I had essential supplies, such as face masks, sanitizers, and gloves, readily available at all times. I became well-versed in proper hygiene practices and followed social distancing norms rigorously, especially when encountering other cyclists or pedestrians during my rides.

Besides this, I also communicated with local cycling clubs, communities, and fellow bikers to stay updated on any changes in regulations or trail closures due to the pandemic. This helped me avoid unnecessary risks and guarantee a smooth and safe biking experience.

Memorable Adventures: A Snapshot

Over the course of my biking big year, I encountered breathtaking landscapes, overcame personal milestones, and forged unforgettable memories. Here is a snapshot of some of my favorite adventures:

The Mighty Mountains of the Andes

In awe of the grandeur of the Andes, I embarked on a thrilling mountain biking expedition in South America. The winding trails, steep ascents, and jaw-dropping vistas left me breathless, both figuratively and literally!

Exploring Ancient European Cities

I combined my love for history and cycling by embarking on a European adventure. From the romantic canals of Amsterdam to the charming streets of Prague, I explored iconic cities on my bike, immersing myself in the rich culture and architectural wonders.

A Coastal Escape in Southeast Asia

Revelling in the warm sand, crystal-clear waters, and vibrant cultures, I discovered the beauty of Southeast Asia's coastal regions on my bike. Navigating

through coastal roads while relishing the seafood delicacies and interacting with friendly locals was a true delight.

Reflection and Growth

Beyond the physical challenges and remarkable experiences, my biking big year also allowed me to reflect, grow, and find solace in the face of the pandemic's uncertainties.

Cycling became my form of meditation, helping me clear my mind, find solace, and rejuvenate amidst the chaos. The freedom and simplicity of pedaling through nature became a source of tranquility and a reminder of the beauty that still exists in the world.

Undertaking a biking big year in the era of Covid-19 was undoubtedly an incredible experience that transformed a year filled with uncertainty into one of adventure and personal growth. Exploring diverse landscapes, challenging myself physically, and embracing the beauty of nature allowed me to find joy, hope, and resilience amidst the chaos.

I encourage fellow cyclists, adventurers, and nature enthusiasts to embark on their personal biking big years, as it can provide a unique and rewarding escape even during challenging times. So grab your helmet, hop on your bike, and commence a journey of a lifetime – you won't regret it!

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Extreme Birding takes one on the myriad adventures of an avid birder and his quest to find as many bird species as possible whilst being self-supported and powered only by his legs.

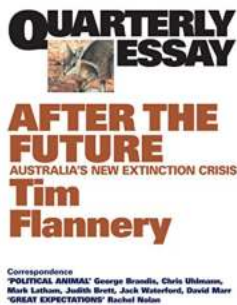
Living in northeastern Illinois where cold weather is king five to six months a year, Beau Schaefer rode his gravel bikes over 6000 miles and identified 276 species of birds on these rides through the six-county greater Chicago area. All of this in the midst of a pandemic. A CrossFit coach and retired high school biology teacher, Schaefer took up cycling in 2018 to combat severe sciatica. The bike quickly became his main transport for bird-finding missions.

In addition, Beau's odyssey was one of social connection and group effort, as numerous people and groups played a significant part in the planning, support, and bird finding.

“Beau presents a detailed and interesting account of his effort to conduct a Green Big Year in Lake County, Illinois, a largely suburban area north of Chicago. Chasing birds is in the blood of many birders, and Beau presents an environmentally sound way to do that. It may not be for everyone, but Beau’s tale

is certainly an inspiration for the rest of us.” — Joel Greenberg, author of *A Feathered River Across the Sky* and *The Natural History of the Chicago Region*

"Beau's Green Big Year achievement is the envy of every Chicago birder – an incredible 276 birds seen on a year-long, fossil-free, 6,119-mile walking and biking odyssey while frequently dealing with the vagaries of Chicago weather, including snow. It's a feat of physical endurance, birding skill, strategic planning and sheer grit. Whether you're a casual birder or an everyday-in-the-field fanatic, this book is a wild ride (literally!) and one you won't forget." — Rena Cohen, President, Lake/Cook Chapter, Illinois Audubon Society



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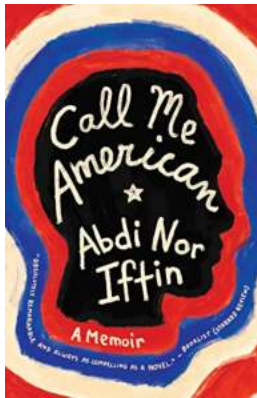
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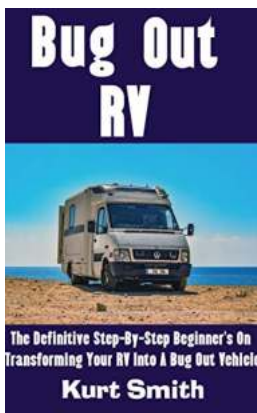
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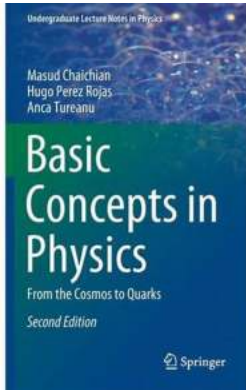
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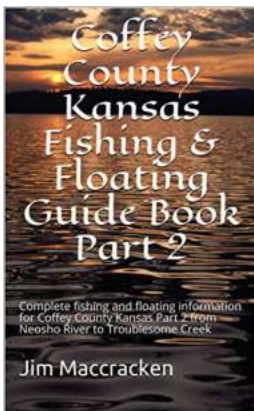
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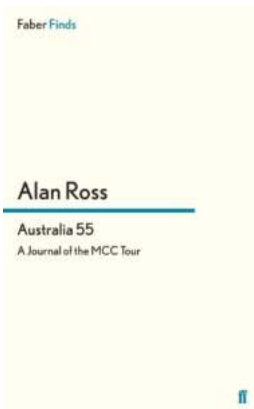
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