



Vol 3 Issue 6 December 2010

## CSCC Bent Fork Editors



*Editors Sharon Boyd & Dale Campbell*

As 2010 comes to an end, Dale and I would like to express our thanks to all of the Bent Fork Chronicles contributors. We appreciate your articles, pictures and feedback.

We look forward to 2011, filled with bike rides, activities and fun. August 22, the inaugural Quiznos Pro Challenge (seven-stage 11-city professional cycling competition) comes to Colorado. Stage 1, the prologue time trial, will be held in Colorado Springs. And, we will have the world's best cycling competitors in our backyard.

[read more...](#)

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## President's Message

*Holiday thoughts from Charlie Czar...*

The year draws to a close. Individually and as a Club we have managed to accomplish a lot. Let's all come together at the annual Club Holiday Party on DEC 11 to share 2010 in review. This will be the "Kick-Off" of our 25th Year Celebration. I look forward to the many things that we can accomplish during this special year. Bring your thoughts with you to the party and share them, so that we can make many of them come true. Have a safe and happy Holiday Season.

Barb & Charlie Czar

## Socially Yours

*Chris Conboy*

Hello Fellow Bike Club Members...we're all busy at this holiday time of the year, so I want to remind you that our next BIG social event is the Holiday Party at the Clarion on DEC 11. Starting at 5:30pm, cocktails and appetizers will be available in the Geneva Room (upstairs). Ron and Joan have once again agreed to provide "songs of the season" to get us all in the holiday mood and dance music...there will be a dance floor, so everybody can get up and perform their best "Dancing with the Stars" moves! Charlie has planned some surprises, and we'll have some featured guests to honor, along with other award winners.

[read more...](#)

## New CSCC Jerseys



*Progressive Dinner Ride  
Appetizer/Salad Stop*

Progressive Dinner Ride cyclists show off their new CSCC Jerseys.

## peopleforbikes.org

*Andy Clarke*

Photo credit: Dale Campbell

### 25th Annual Frozen Water Bottle Ride

Bob Smith

Check out the January 2011 Events Calendar on the CSCC website!

The CSCC 2011 Frozen Water Bottle Ride starts at 10am on Saturday, January 1st. The ride begins from BJ's Brewhouse & Restaurant in the University Village Colorado Shopping Center. After the ride, we will celebrate the New Year and the CSCC 25th Frozen Waterbottle Ride at BJ's.

### Ride Committee



Wanted - Ride Leaders

Austin Clark, who rode with us in Pueblo, is part of the Southern COTrail Builders. They have a great collection of maps and info on the MTBtrails around the Lake Pueblo reservoir on this website.

<http://www.lakepueblotrails.org/default.asp>

The Ride Planning Committee Pedal on! Janine Hegeman

### Fall River Ride



John Davenport



### PLEASE SIGN ON THE UNDOTTED LINE.....

Andy Clarke, president of the League of American Bicyclists, Recently wrote to us with information and a plea regarding Bikes Belong's campaign Peopleforbikes.org. It's designed, Andy said, "... to unite one million voices to improve bicycling in the United States. It simply asks people to sign a pledge in support of biking. The goal is to help make our nation a better place to ride by sending a powerful message to our elected leaders, the media, and the public that bicycling is important and should be promoted."

[read more...](#)

### Bike Handling Skills as read in Active.com

Bruce Hildenbrand

Bike handling skills are something that every cyclist, including the pros, can always improve. Nobody likes crashing and while certain accidents are almost unavoidable, improving your skills on the bike can vastly increase your chances of staying upright.

Most recreational cyclists will never approach the skills of the best pros: The top riders can put on their rain jacket in a downpour and go through hairpins in the Alps with no hands on the bars. Some of us mortals may be able to accomplish that feat on a straight, smooth road, but the big boys have to be able to put on a jacket in any situation.

There are a couple of skills that we can all learn, both of which come in handy multiple times during a single ride.

[read more...](#)

### Cycling Around The World

Dale Campbell - Bent Fork Editor

Downhill Mountain Biking with a Volcanic Twist? If you thought some of the mountain biking in Colorado is tough, take a look at the article on the BBC Sport webpage that describes the downhill race on Reunion Island, which is located in the Indian Ocean. The article titled "Mountain Bikers Tackle Volcano" and found at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/olympic\\_games/world\\_olympic\\_dreams/9238517.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport2/hi/olympic_games/world_olympic_dreams/9238517.stm) details the efforts of a local Reunion Islander that has entered the race, as well as Olympic level racers, who ride through an ever-changing terrain that composes the race course. The combination of the tropics, mountain bikers and a volcano makes for some interesting reading!

### Summer Refresher in Estes Park

Ron Hargrave

A weekend away from Colorado Springs at the end of July seemed like a good idea to Janine and I. We chose Estes Park as our location for bike



On Saturday October 2, CSCC'er's gathered at the Nevada Park 'n' Ride in Colorado Springs to participate in a "field trip." Over 30 participants anticipated a wonderful ride along the extensive walking and biking trails in Pueblo. As we collected ourselves for the carpool down, it was duly noted that the weather was near perfect. We brought mostly mountain bikes and a few brought road bikes.

[read more...](#)

riding, rest and relaxation. We selected a leisurely route through Denver and Boulder. Our only plans for Friday afternoon were to check into the hotel

when we arrived in Estes Park. However, we were delayed by traffic on I-25 in the middle of Denver, and experienced more traffic delays in Boulder. We searched for a good place to eat in Boulder. I remembered that there used to be a nice mom & pop restaurant, but I was unable to find it. So, we decided on Quizno's. Once refreshed, Janine and I headed out Highway 36, and continued our journey to Estes Park.

[read more...](#)



## Membership Updates

*Sara Hill*

### **Welcome New Members!**

Claire Forsyth & Family, Doug Smith, Dennis & Terry Struck, Isaac Spragg, Stanley Adams, Charles Knoeckel, and Ken & Leslie Bernard

### **Renewing Members-Thanks!**

Sandy Greenspoon, John Everett, Bill & Cynthia Doty, Deegan Lew, Bryan & Jodi Miller, Roger Neeland, Doug Pape, Carol Keenan, Mike & Lorena Wilder, P.K. Robinson, Jeff Cowen, and Terry & Jay Toppe

[read more...](#)

## Barge & Bike Trip / Dalmatian Coast of Croatia

*Carolyn Myers-Woods & Dick Woods*

Recently (mid October) Dick Woods and Carolyn Myers-Woods enjoyed a Barge and Bike trip to the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia. We flew from Denver, CO to Split, Croatia. Split is on the Adriatic Sea coast of Croatia. We enjoyed walking around the historic town and stayed at a hotel in the historical center of the town – The Diocletian Palace which is 1700 years old and has massive outer walls – was home to our very lovely, modernized hotel. Inside the Palace walls were cathedrals, museums and shops.



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### **CSCC Bent Fork Editors**

*Editors Sharon Boyd & Dale Campbell*

Below are just a few of the bike rides that were enjoyed by CSCC members in October and November:

On Saturday, OCT 2 thirty CSCC riders enjoyed a Fall River Ride in Pueblo. The ride began at the Front Range Trail CSU Pueblo Trailhead. We explored miles of gorgeous trails along the Arkansas River, Pueblo Riverwalk, and a stop at The Nature Center's Coyote's Den Coffee for lunch.

On Sunday, OCT 24 seventy riders enjoyed the CSCC Progressive Dinner Ride with three stops for appetizers/salads, entree and dessert. We proudly wore our new 25th Anniversary Club jerseys.

On Saturday, NOV 6 John Pamperin and 20 CSCC members participated in the Colorado Springs Veterans Day Parade, the third largest Veterans Day parade in the nation. The CSCC parade vehicles included the various regular and unique uprights, trikes, recumbents, tandems, and the teardrop.

A first for Sharon: on Monday, NOV 8, my friend Judy and I enjoyed a 13-mile single-track mountain bike ride around the Air Force Academy's Falcon Trail. We started at the trailhead on Academy Drive and rode clockwise. The trail is well marked, and we were rewarded with great views of the Air Force Academy and the Front Range foot hills. I recommend this challenging and exciting mountain bike route.

Happy Holidays! Sharon & Dale

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## Socially Yours

*Chris Conboy*

Please check out the CSCC website, since we have online reservations as well as "snail mail" reservations. The on-line reservation system is new this year, so we would like your input. The club is subsidizing the cost of the evening to say thank you for all of your hard work during the year. If you RSVP between DEC1 and midnight DEC 7th the Club will pay \$10 and you pay \$20. If you wait until DEC 8 through DEC 10, then the Club pays \$5 and you pay \$25. If you fail to RSVP and come to the Holiday Party the night of the event, then you'll pay the full \$30.

Also, remember the Parade of Lights on DEC 4. The Theme Team is planning something new for this year's parade. We welcome all club members to participate—ride or cheer on your fellow members. And, remember to wear your helmet, lights, and warm clothes for the evening. Everyone is welcome to come to the Garage Mahal (528 East Bijou) after the parade for a soup /chili /salad potluck supper. Picnic ware and beverages will be provided. You are welcome to park in front of the B & B (A Room with a View) and walk down to Tejon for the parade. Come early as spaces fill up fast! That's all for now! 2011 promises to be a year filled with more social activities for the club. I welcome all input for new and fresh ideas. Have a happy and safe New Year!

Socially Yours, Chris

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## peopleforbikes.org

*Andy Clarke*

Andy added that he personally has signed the pledge, and that to date nearly 100,000 others across the country have, too--including Lance Armstrong, Gary Fisher, and R.T. Rybak, the mayor of bicycle-friendly Minneapolis.

At the following link you can sign the pledge, send a message to your friends about the campaign, and share a story about why you ride.

<http://www.peopleforbikes.org>

To help reach these goals, there are three things you can do right now:

- 1) Tell your fellow riders to sign the pledge.
- 2) You can spread the word through email, Facebook, and Twitter.
- 3) Share your story. Help us explain the joy and benefits of bicycling -- tell us why you ride.

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## **Bike Handling Skills as read in Active.com**

*Bruce Hildenbrand*

### **Hand Placement**

One of the most basic skills pertains to hand placement on the handlebars. Not everyone likes to have their hands in exactly the same position, but the key component, which is the same wherever you place your hands, is that they need to be locked in some way to the handlebars. Placing your hands on top of the handlebars without locking them in place with your thumbs is just asking for trouble. One small bump in the road could cause your hands to come flying off the bars, and a crash is almost 100 percent guaranteed. We have opposing thumbs; use them to keep your hands securely fastened to the handlebars. That doesn't mean you need to have a death grip mentality. Holding on too hard causes fatigue and transmits road shock to your upper body. Make sure your thumbs are loosely opposing your fingers so that if a bump is encountered, your hands don't come flying off the bars.

### **Riding One-Handed**

Another tip from the pros makes your bike more stable when drinking from your water bottle or taking an on-the-bike photo. Before you reach for your bottle or grab your camera out of your jersey pocket, move your other hand as close to the stem as possible and grab the handlebars there. Moving the contact point toward the center of your handlebars gives you more control over steering the bike and helps you maintain control should you hit a bump or other irregularity in the road. The key here is to minimize movement in your upper body. If you look over your shoulder to take a picture of all the buddies you dropped on the last climb, it's more likely you will stay in control. Remember, when riding in a group, going forward in a straight line is good.

So whenever you need to take one hand off the bars, before doing so, move your other hand as close to the stem as possible. You will have much more control over your bike and be a much safer rider on the road.

Bruce Hildenbrand is a freelance journalist covering cycling and a host of other outdoor-related sports. Find the latest news, rumors and more on his Active Expert blog. He splits his time between Mountain View, California, Boulder, Colorado, and Europe.

Thank you to Active.com ([www.Active.com](http://www.Active.com)) for permission to publish Bruce's article.

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## Fall River Ride

*John Davenport*

Over 90% of the trails in Pueblo are hard surface, allowing for most kinds of bikes to participate. However, goat heads, glass, and other tire dangers populated the pathway. BUT- only one flat tire was witnessed by me on this ride! Participants consisted of the members from three clubs: CSCC, PPOTHG (Pikes Peak Over The Hill Gang), and the Southern Colorado Trail Builders.

The ride started at the Colorado State University campus in the northeast corner of Pueblo. (Parking is ample on campus but availability near the trailhead off the southwestern-most parking lot depends on class schedules.) The trail proceeds west downhill to University Avenue. After passing under University Avenue, the path follows Fountain Creek gradually downhill to the Arkansas River. The scenery for this section includes railway bridges, picnic areas, swamps, forest, residential, and a sort of rough-looking neighborhood near an ice cream shop. We found ourselves pedaling a little faster here...

After passing over Fountain Creek, the path passes under a low train bridge which encouraged some of us to duck. After this train bridge, the path leads between the Arkansas River and the south side of Runyon Lake where fishing is a common activity. The path around the north side of the lake has a 6 mile round trip spur to the River Walk in downtown Pueblo. The north side path also joins with the south side path in time for the trip across the Arkansas River. Our planned route took us along the south side.

Below the bridge crossing the Arkansas River is a dam which is another popular fishing spot. Once on the south side of the Arkansas River, we passed through a canyon of sloped cement walls for several miles. The sloped cement walls have been painted with significant numbers of murals and graffiti. The latest mural was painted in 2010 and consists of 5 naked female Angels on the left and 4 male Devils on the right. After the canyon, the path leads through a forested river bank. The first bridge over the Arkansas River may be taken into a small park and to another pathway along the north side of the river. The south side pathway to the second bridge is newer and preferred. At the second bridge, a pathway going straight leads to the City Park, Pueblo ZOO and miles of other trails. However, we proceeded right over this second bridge and followed the pathway to the left along the north side of Arkansas River, past another river dam, and to the Nature Center. The scenery as you approach the Nature Center changes to semi-desert on the right with mesa, cactus, and many small lizards, and river-bottom vegetation (cottonwoods, willows, lush undergrowth) to the right. The highlight at the Nature Center is the Coyote's Coffee Den with a patio facing south and under the Cottonwood trees. They have a wide variety of food including alcoholic beverages. There is also a large deck to enjoy a picnic and watch the river go by.

Riders on our adventure stopped and gathered at the Nature Center. We had several choices: have lunch, or take one of two lead trips to the Pueblo Reservoir and have lunch later, or to visit the Raptor center. I chose to have lunch (delicious!) and then lead a ride to the reservoir. The ride to the reservoir is about 6 miles round trip. Of course, there are significant trails beyond the reservoir dam on either side of the dam. We rode up the right side of the dam and onto a small beach. Only a few went to the beach from the path and only I went in the water. On the return trip, the sun had warmed up the pathway sufficiently to attract rattlesnakes to sunning on the pathway. SNAKE!! Some in the group managed to scare it off the path. Others reported seeing a tarantula, and several took a ride over some of the mountain bike trails.

Our group arrived back at the Nature Center at 2:30 pm for the return trip. One group went directly back to the start...I heard they may have experienced unintended trails...and the other

group left a little later and took the detour to the River Walk. The River Walk is surrounded by various eating places & shops and would make a great alternate to the Nature Center on future trips to Pueblo. Also on the return trip, some of us bravely visited the ice cream shop by the path and enjoyed an ice cream picnic. We got back to the Springs by 5 p.m. and we all agreed it was a thoroughly enjoyable trip.

The Pueblo trail system is one of the best in country. No need to go on roads, it's got varied and interesting scenery, 90%+ hard surface, and has a very detailed map. The City of Pueblo Parks and Trails Map is one of the best trail maps available and can be viewed and downloaded free from the following web site:

[http://www.pueblo.us/documents/Parks\\_Recreation/ParksAndTrailsMap.pdf](http://www.pueblo.us/documents/Parks_Recreation/ParksAndTrailsMap.pdf)

We rode anywhere from 34-40 miles, on mostly flat surfaces. Pueblo is a great place to ride. Stay tuned, CSCC may just make this an annual event!

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## Summer Refresher in Estes Park

*Ron Hargrave*

Wanting to take a slower, scenic route, I took Left Hand Canyon to Ward and the Peak-to-Peak Highway. If you have never been there, it's a great ride on a bike or in a car. I've done both, but I prefer my bike! We passed a few bikers on the way up the hill, and many cyclists were headed downhill at high speed. This was obviously a popular route; a tree-lined road through a twisting canyon. Shortly before we got to Ward it started raining, which caused us to have bad thoughts about the rain and concern for our much-hoped-for weekend of bike riding. The rain came down harder and harder as we got closer to Estes Park, our destination. Lucky for us--the rain began to let up, as we approached our hotel.

After we checked into the hotel, the rain finally stopped. With camera in hand, we decided to take a walk into the tourist part of town. Janine and I enjoyed the walking tour along the river walk and stopped at a coffee shop. I remembered that there were a number of shops renting bikes, but we couldn't seem to find one. Just as we headed back to our hotel, we spotted a small shop. The sales clerk gave us a map (not much detail) and showed us one of the popular bike routes; Devil's Gulch through Glen Haven, to Drake and back to Estes Park. The clerk said most bikers ride the route clockwise in about two hours. That sounded good to us, so Janine and I decided to seek adventure on two wheels instead of four.

We woke up on July 31st to a beautiful sunny albeit a little cool morning. Janine and I readied ourselves for an adventure of riding an unknown route through the Rocky Mountains. We started with a hearty breakfast buffet at the hotel. Then, with our new map in pocket, we headed out to discover what the roads had to offer. We thought we would begin with a short loop around Estes Lake, and then follow the route we were given. Somehow we ended up on the opposite side of the lake than we planned. We decided to just forge ahead on Highway 34 to Drake, which was the opposite direction from what we were told. We passed a sign showing Drake a short ten miles down the road to our first turn. As it turned out, it was an exciting downhill run, enabling us to hit speeds around 45 miles per hour. The road and scenery were great. Not a wide shoulder, but adequate for riding downhill.

Along the Big Thompson River, we passed romantic cottages nestled against the canyon walls. Occasionally we saw people fishing, waist deep in the rushing water, possibly trying to catch their next meal. It was interesting that we didn't see any bikers headed up the hill as we flew downhill. Finally, after what seemed like an hour with the wind roaring past our ears, we reached our first turn in Drake. We were going downhill against the traffic and couldn't make an easy left turn in the two-way traffic. So, we stopped and waited for traffic to clear then darted across the road toward our next point of interest. Along the way, we saw a nice gentleman selling handmade wooden toys at the corner. After a short greeting to him, we were on our way to Glen Haven.

As soon as Janine and I started up the road, I knew the bike ride was just beginning. After a ten mile downhill, we had to climb to get back to Estes Park. We began at Devil's Gulch Road and biked along the North Fork of the Big Thompson River! We maintained a good pace of ten to fifteen mph on the climb to Glen Haven. We stopped to take photos along the way. Finally, we made it to Glen Haven, and stopped at the country store for refreshing drinks. We were both tempted to splurge with the smell of their huge, fresh cinnamon rolls! We'll plan for a snack next time! We chatted with some locals, who were surprised we were biking up the hill... They warned us about the switchbacks and the steep grade. However, Janine and I had no choice but to continue on our way.

This was another good road; not a lot of shoulder but not much traffic either. We came to a point

where the road appeared to go straight up. We stayed in our lowest gears, rotated the pedals and up we went. I was actually down to three mph at one point, but continued to move forward. After a couple stops in the switchbacks to rest, we made it to the top of the hill at Overlook Ranch to enjoy the great view of Estes Park and the mountains beyond. Another couple rode up; they were visiting family in Estes Park for the weekend and brought their bikes, too. They rode ahead of us, while we took a couple photos. Then, we caught up with them part way down the hill. They talked us into taking an additional few miles with them up the road to the entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park. The sign said it was only 3 miles, but it was all up hill and it seemed like it was 20 miles. We did it! Then, we rode back to the hotel. Total miles: 40.033 Riding time: 2 hrs, 56 min.

We arrived at the hotel a little before noon and relaxed in the hot tub. Janine and I found a nice buffet of Indian food, which was good except for the flies in the rice pudding! After lunch, we walked and walked, touring the town, walking to the Stanley Hotel, taking pictures and enjoying quick drink. While driving around the outlying parts of town, we took good picture of elk. Later after learning about a free jazz concert, we walked to the far end of town to enjoy the good music. Then, it was time to locate a place to refuel. I had some fairly good ribs, but Janine's choice was tuna kabobs that appeared to be more like shoe leather on a stick. Then we headed back to the hotel to sleep, before heading out on our mountain bikes in the morning.

Sunday morning began cool and clear. Janine and I had a good breakfast and unloaded our bikes for another adventure. We discovered the turn to go around the lake that we had missed the day before. From that point we discovered another trail that headed up Fish Creek. We followed a wide paved path around a golf course, uphill past beaver ponds, fishing ponds and residential areas. It was quiet and peaceful. At the top, we turned around retracing our route to enjoy the scenery. We were surprised to see turkey vultures sitting on fence posts along the trail; there must have been fifteen of them. They finally took flight from all of our picture-taking. Janine and I pedaled around the lake and returned to the hotel. We cleaned up, packed up, checked out and got ready for our trip home through Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). We opted to have lunch somewhere else!

Leaving the hotel, we headed through some of the back roads to the entrance to RMNP. Onward and upward we drove on Trail Ridge Road, the highest continuous road in the USA. The highpoint is 12,183 feet above sea level. Janine and I stopped at a few viewpoints along the way to take photos. At a few of these stops, the weather and lightening appeared to be moving closer. At the highest point on the road, we stopped and hiked up a trail to see the view. But, before we got to the top, the weather moved in quickly. We reached the safety of our car, just as the rain started. We continued through RMNP, occasionally getting pictures of wildlife. Just before the park exit at Grand Lake, we came upon a traffic jam. We assumed a wild animal caused the traffic jam and cars stopped on the road. A single Park Ranger was frantically running up and down the road, attempting to keep traffic moving. As it turned out, a couple moose were lurching on the brush just off the road. These were huge animals had monster antlers. They could barely be viewed above the brush, but we could tell they were BIG! Rain started to fall again, so we continued on our way. We stopped in Granby for a delightful lunch. We enjoyed barbeque brisket and turkey club sandwiches, and some outstanding green chili.

The rest of the drive home was uneventful. There was lots of traffic on I-70 through Idaho Springs, which is a typical pattern on a Sunday evening. Janine and I finally drove out of the rain. We took the scenic route through Perry Park, Palmer Lake and Monument on Hwy 105 before getting on I-25 to arrive home. Along the Perry Park Highway, we got our last and most surprising "wildlife" photographs – two camels grazing in a pasture along the road! Overall, it was a great weekend of fun bike riding and touring. Neither of us was too impressed with the food in Estes Park, but we didn't starve to death. The views, scenery and challenging bike riding made it an A+ destination for us, and we highly recommend it!





## Membership Updates

*Sara Hill*

**REMINDER:** Family memberships are eligible for two adult online logins. With each login, members can comment on the message boards or respond to surveys independently. If you wish to have a second adult login, please contact Membership at [membership@bikesprings.org](mailto:membership@bikesprings.org). Provide the following information: Name on membership account, secondary member's name and email along with a preferred username. If you have a preference for billing identity, indicate this as well.

Do you have questions regarding membership? Feel free to contact Sara Hill, Membership Coordinator at [membership@bikesprings.org](mailto:membership@bikesprings.org).

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## **Barge & Bike Trip / Dalmatian Coast of Croatia**

*Carolyn Myers-Woods & Dick Woods*

The next morning, we boarded our Barge – the Kapetan Jure. This was a 100 ft. sailing vessel, with huge sails, but they used the motor to sail between islands. There were 15 cabins that each accommodated 2 persons, each cabin had shower and toilet in the cabin. Thirty people made up the bicycling group – the ship had a crew of 5 and 2 bicycle guides.

In the group of 30 bicyclers were people from 8 different countries – Canada, Germany, Switzerland, England, Scotland, Australia, Spain, and Dick and I from the USA. The bicycling group was divided between road bikers and mountain bikers. The ship provided the bicycles – all part of the cost of the trip. Some of the people who drove from Germany and Switzerland brought their own bicycles. We were in the road bike group and our guide, Elvis, was a 21 year old Croatian. The mountain bike group's guide was 25 year old Thoralph from Germany and he loved the mud!! Typical mountain biker! Most of the bicyclers spoke at least "limited" English, but there were a few Germans who did not speak or understand much English. The guides gave the day's instructions in Croatian, German, and English.

The ship provided all meals – even lunch – and when we were out on the bikes all day, they sent a sack lunch. The food was very good, and each night at dinner we had a luscious desert.

Croatia has over 1200 islands along the Adriatic Coast, and each island has a name. Including all of the islands – Croatia has more coastline than Italy – which is just across the Adriatic Sea.

We bicycled on a different island every day, including Brac, Korcula, Hvar, Pucisca, Solta, Pomena and Mljet. Seven islands in all; the first day we bicycled on the mainland outside of Split. These are volcanic islands, and had very steep inclines. The boat docked and the guides put the bicycles off, and we started the day's journey – straight up!! One day, the road did go straight up – looked like a wall – in fact; the guides called it the WALL. It had 18% grade in most parts. We walked a good part of that hill!! It was even very difficult to walk and push the bikes. The distance was only 4 Kilometers, but gained 1869 feet! That was the morning ride – in the afternoon another big climb of 1500 ft in 4 Kilometers, or 2.48 miles.

On Korcula we visited the home and birthplace of Marco Polo, and this island was also the birthplace and early home of the scientist Nicolas Tesla. The island of Brac has a large quarry of limestone and marble – and some of these have been used in the White House in Washington, D.C.

The islands were beautiful – this area is the new playground for wealthy Europeans. There were lots of big, fancy yachts in the harbors, and ferries had regular routes to the islands.

We had a lovely time on this trip – it was fun to get acquainted with the people in the biking group who were from different countries. Most of them were the age of our children – some were the age of our grandchildren!!

There were small villages in the hills away from the port towns and they were very quaint, with people having large gardens and lovely flowers. On these islands, there were limited retail stores – but many outdoor markets and vegetable and fruit markets.

Hvala lijepa – Thank you very much!

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