



● Ushuaia in Argentina is the southernmost city in the world



● Jersey is a great destination for novice tourers

ISLAND HOPPING

*Bembridge Wheeler **Judith Atkins** swapped the Isle of Wight for Jersey*

THERE WERE four of us: experienced cyclists Margaret and Alexander, and apprehensive novices James and me. We need not have worried. For two days, we were in the safe hands of local guide Arthur Lamy, who took us on routes he had devised for us, taught us about Jersey, introduced us to points of interest, and carried out running repairs to our hire bikes.

Jersey's varied terrain offers something for everyone: flat, coastal routes (good for beginners of any age), as well as challenging inland climbs, and everything in between. The island is crisscrossed by well-signed cycleways and miles of 'green lanes' (speed limit 15mph) where cyclists have priority over cars.

We plunged down country lanes bounded by high, lush hedgerows. We rested in the cool, calm tranquility of St Matthew's Church in St Lawrence, with its Lalique windows made from white, moulded glass. We watched as farmers harvested the famous Royal Jersey potatoes, and then sampled some for supper. We went bird-watching at St Ouen's Pond. We battled the wind as we cycled from St Helier along the seafront cycle route that bounds the beautiful St Aubin's Bay, and were rewarded with a following wind on the return run.

Charming cafés and plentiful cycle racks dotted our way, and Jersey's drivers must be the most considerate in the world. We are already planning a return trip to the island, which now ranks as joint favourite with our own beautiful Isle of Wight.

To the world's end

Martin Philpot headed for the tip of South America, riding on the Carretera Austral

The Carretera Austral is one of the world's classic bike touring routes. This dusty washboard road through the Chilean Andes was created in the 1980s under the Pinochet regime in an attempt to link the country's most isolated residents to the rest of the country. Pinochet was overthrown before he had the road tarmacked, so the route is under used because of its poor condition. Offshoot routes take you to amazing glaciers, mountain hamlets, and stunning national parks.

I was fortunate enough to fly out to Puerto Montt in January and head south as a solo rider. The Carretera Austral ends after 1,240km at Villa O'Higgins. From there, I decided to continue another 1,500km south to

Ushuaia in Argentina, which is the most southern city on the planet.

I rode a Thorn Nomad with a Rohloff Speedhub and invested also in a Hilleberg Nallo 2 GT tent. Both were essential items to survive the truly awful ripio road surface and the horrendous Patagonian winds.

High points of the trip? The friendships I made with other travellers; wild camping in the shadows of Fitz Roy mountain and Torres del Paine; experiencing the Moreno glacier and the thunderous noise as massive chunks of ice fell off; and arriving in Ushuaia in a blizzard on my last day. Low points? Five days of solid rain; battling headwinds and getting blown off the road three times, tumbling into roadside ditches; and bedbugs in a hostel in Puerto Natales!

It was an amazing adventure. At times it was truly tough and challenging, as the dusty track wound up thousands of metres into the snow-capped Andes. Wild camping was often the only option, and managing my supply of food and water was vital. Riding through true wilderness has its obvious challenges but for me holds the real reward of such a trip.



● Monte Fitz Roy, on the Chile-Argentina border



● The ride set off at 10:30pm and went through the night

DELIGHTFUL DENMARK

Charles and Diana Hutchinson crossed the North Sea for a 14-day tour



● The Danes are justly proud of their country. Flags abound

The Dartmoor Ghost

Graham Brodie describes Devon CTC's spook-themed nighttime audax event

On a spectacular June evening, a group of Devon cyclists had a strange encounter with a ghostly figure, who appeared out of the shadows and into the moonlight... Was it real or just a figment of their fevered imaginations, brought on by the spooky surroundings of the misty moor, the well-known setting for Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*? It was 'Oliver Cromwell', come back in bodily form, just to see them off from Bovey Tracey. This set the tone for the Dartmoor Ghost, a 145km night ride across Dartmoor, visiting some of the area's best spook-spotting sites.

The moon was rising as they set off across Dartmoor, leaving shimmering reflections on the distant coast. Riders passed by the famous Jay's Grave near Houndtor, and then crept past Okehampton Castle, which was bathed in moonlight at the dead of night.

By the time most riders arrived at Yelverton control for hot chowder and coffee, it was getting light, and they were then fortified ready for the climb back over Dartmoor. The dawn ride to Princetown, home of the forbidding Dartmoor Prison, was rewarded by

sheep dodging and sweeping descents into Moretonhampstead,

The final climb went over Docombe to the finishing leg in the Teign Valley and back to Bovey Tracey, where the decidedly real Presland family were busy serving a hearty breakfast to all those who made it safely back to base. Riders might have been little unnerved by their other-worldly expedition but were otherwise thrilled by the exciting experience of being a-wheel while those of a more nervous disposition slumbered soundly in their beds...

Will you be brave enough to join them next year? You can find more details at ctcdevon.co.uk



● 2,300m of climbing didn't deter the riders

DENMARK IS a cyclist's dream, the perfect country for a first international tour. To avoid flying, we took the ferry from Harwich, waking up in Esbjerg next morning. From there, Cycle Route 6 took us 200 miles to Copenhagen, with a train over the sea-bridge at Nyborg. We needed no navigation; we just followed the signs.

On the excellent advice of Lonely Planet, we made a detour on our very first day to the medieval town of Ribe. There were further treats when we re-joined Route 6, bowling through gently undulating farmland, past wind turbines and wheat fields.

We cycled to Odense, the charming birthplace of Hans Christian Anderson, and on to Sorø, a town built along a string of lakes. Of particular interest was Roskilde, with its cathedral, a great blues bar, and its Viking ship museum. There you can join a team of tourists to row a replica longboat out to sea.

All these towns had campsites. We even found a peaceful campsite at Copenhagen. Wonderful, wonderful Copenhagen! Cycle into town at rush hour and experience cycling heaven. This maritime city is airy and elegant, and the Danes all seem to ride bikes.

We had allowed a fortnight for our holiday. After a few days in Copenhagen, we took a train back to Esbjerg, giving us a couple of days on the island of Fanø, relaxing on gorgeous North Sea beaches. Bliss.



SHARE YOUR STORY: Cycle wants your Travellers' Tales. Write or email the editor – details on [page 3](#) – to find out what's required.