

Reviews Books

CYCLING INSPIRATION WHEN YOU'RE STUCK INSIDE

Print queue

Cycle doesn't feature all books received. Reviewers pick the ones they think you need to know about from the editor's list. Send books to: Cycle, Cycling UK, Parklands, Railton Rd, Guildford, GU2 9JX



A Ride Across America



Details

By: Simon Parker
Publisher: September Publishing
Price: £19.99
ISBN: 9781914613593

DOCUMENTARY MAKER Simon Parker takes us on an epic cycle tour from the top left corner of the USA to the bottom right, aiming to understand the people and views that don't tend to shape our impressions of modern America.

On his way he takes time to chat thoughtfully with wise and gentle folk, people who've been dealt a whole pack of hard hands, and others whose views on gun control, welfare and immigration might be difficult for some of us. He's great at taking time to see beyond first impressions, and enjoys a mixture of chance encounters and pre-planned visits.

It's an engaging, compelling read, and in the build-up to the 2024 elections a timely look at a culture where people repeatedly lament being unable to discuss politics with family or friends,

so polarised have things become. Oddly, where it's less engaging is as an advert for cycling across America. Parker's YouTube videos are more positive, but in the book he spends a great deal of time complaining about run-down motels and trashy food. At least in the Southern states the bad food gets replaced by good barbecues, though there are more unchained dogs. He can also dwell more on the traffic than the scenery, maintaining that he has no choice but to make his way through cities.

He does lighten up for a few fine-sounding places – including the whole of Montana – but perhaps he should have visited a site like cycle.travel, which could have helped him avoid big cities in almost all states.

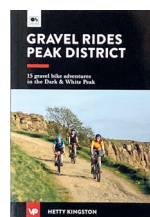
Sean Fishpool



Excerpts

You can read excerpts from some of the books that Cycle has reviewed at

cyclinguk.org/cycle-book-excerpts



Details

By: Hetty Kingston
Publisher: Vertebrate Publishing
Price: £15.95
ISBN: 9781839812316

Gravel Rides Peak District

THIS IS A pocket-sized guide to gravel rides in the mixed landscapes of the Dark and White Peaks. There are colour photos of broad tracks and quiet lanes to lure you into planning your next outdoor exploration. The easy routes feature disused rail paths, while some of the challenging routes take in the moorland grit. Half the routes are described as 'straightforward', with distances from 26 to 33km. Routes are shown as overlays on an OS map. A vibrant narrative and step-by-step directions describe surface types and gradients. Downloading the GPX files will have you covered for route finding.

Lynnette Evans



Details

By: Simon Warren
Publisher: Vertebrate Publishing
Price: £16.95
ISBN: 9781839812354

100 Greatest Cycling Climbs of the Tour de France

SIMON WARREN'S FIRST 'climbs' book has been followed by 13 more, including this one – now in its second edition. The climbs are grouped into French regions with each climb getting a double-page spread. One page is a photo so the description, including TdF history, map and gradient map are squashed onto the other. I was in the Alps this summer so the book helped me pick out the Avoriaz climb and the Col de Joux Plane (awesome).

Ian Small



Details

By: Mike Newton
Publisher: Independently published
Price: £12.95
ISBN: 9798332278020

Cultural LEJOG September 2023

IF YOU LIKE Wikipedia you will like reading this book, which has lots of facts about the places that are along the route (many of which the writer didn't get to see), as well as 230 photos to bring the trip to life. The appendix gives you plenty of information about how they planned for the trip, what they took and maps for reference. I personally prefer more of a travel log about the places and people visited rather than Wikipedia references, so whether you'll enjoy it depends on your reading preferences.

Jenny Jackson